June 28, 1999 | 49145 $3.50 U.S., $4.50 Canadian

KOSOVO ENDGAME: Abrams, Bacevich, the Editors

NATIONAL REVIEW

Clinton's Warrior Princesses

Jay Nordlinger on
MADELEINE ALBRIGHT

Mark Steyn on

Byron York on

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SERB DOUBTS

Living in cross hairs of NATO

by Justin Brown
Special to The Christian Science Monitor

BELGRADE, YUGOSLAVIA

WHEN an earthquake hit northern Serbia last week, the people of Belgrade thought it was the Big One – not a natural disaster, but the bomb attack NATO had been threatening after seven months of violence

Idaho Battles Image as Haven for Hate

A white-supremacist group marched here July 18. State has most hate groups per capita.

by Brad Knickerbocker
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

COEUR D'ALENE, IDAHO– When someone says "Idaho," do you think: "First state with a Jewish governor; first state where a native American won statewide office; fourth state to allow women the right to vote; first state to pass the Equal Rights Amendment

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NATIONAL REVIEW

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http://www.nationalreview.com

NATIONAL REVIEW (ISSN: 0028-0038) is published bi-weekly, except for the first issue in January, by National Review, Inc., at 215 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y., and additional mailing offices.

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Address all editorial mail, manuscripts, letters to the editor, etc., to Editorial Dept., NATIONAL REVIEW, 215 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Address all subscription mail orders, changes of address, undeliverable copies, etc., to Circulation Dept., NATIONAL REVIEW, P. O. Box 668, Mount Morris, Ill. 61054-0668; phone, 815-734-1232, Monday–Friday, 7:30 A.M. to 10:30 P.M. Eastern time. Adjustment requests should be accompanied by a current mailing label or facsimile. Direct classified advertising inquiries to: Classifieds Dept., National Review, 215 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016 or call 212-679-7330. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Circulation Dept., NATIONAL REVIEW, P. O. Box 668, Mount Morris, Ill. 61054-0668. Printed in the U.S.A.

RATES: $59.00 a year (25 issues). Add $21.50 for Canada and other foreign subscriptions, per year. (All payments in U.S. currency.) The editors cannot be responsible for unsolicited manuscripts or artwork unless return postage or, better, a stamped self-addressed envelope is enclosed. Opinions expressed in signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the editors.

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NATIONAL REVIEW

June 28 issue; June 9

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WORLD WIDE WEB http://www.nationalreview.com
MAIN NUMBER 212-679-7330
SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRIES 815-734-1232
WASHINGTON OFFICE 202-543-9226
ADVERTISING SALES 212-679-7330
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■ LETTERS ■

SAVING AMERICA'S SAVINGS

It's a shame that Ramesh Ponnuru is so excited about President Clinton's Universal Savings accounts ("Social Calendar," April 19) and difficult to believe that NATIONAL REVIEW wants to improve America's savings ethic by backing a program that matches a tax credit with someone else's money. There are a number of problems with the president's approach:

(1) A key conservative goal over the last several decades has been to keep liberals from endlessly creating new programs. But Ponnuru has jumped on the White House bandwagon: Social Security does not work as it should, so let's create a whole new program, USA accounts, duplicating some of Social Security's functions—not a conservative position. It is also naïve to assume that Congress will later consolidate the USA accounts into Social Security.

(2) USA accounts are an invitation to tax increases: Using projected surpluses to fund USA accounts means that if the government goes back into the red, working Americans will lose out. Once deficits return, Congress will either end the program or hand our children the bill for another entitlement program. Far from being a tax cut, USA accounts are the first step to future tax increases.

(3) USA accounts do not address Social Security's problems: Using part of the surplus to fund a new savings program will do nothing to solve Social Security's impending financial crisis and lousy returns. USA accounts are a typical liberal solution: Spend more tax money without instituting reforms.

(4) USA accounts could open the door to government investment in the stock market, but the actual details are not clear. While Ponnuru assumes the money will go into privately managed accounts, this is not certain. The president says only that he will "explore whether it would be possible to provide account holders with the option of investing directly with private-sector fund managers." We suppose that Ponnuru sees this as an iron-clad commitment from a president we can trust.

(5) USA accounts are badly designed: Most of the lowest-income families will not have enough income to make the contributions necessary for the federal match. Faced with the choice of paying their children's medical bills or the rent, or saving for college, they will not have the extra money needed to get matching funds. USA accounts are just another middle-class entitlement program.

Conservatives should demand real Social Security reform, allowing people to place some of the current payroll tax into personal retirement accounts. They should not fall for Clinton's bait, which merely promises to thwart reform.

David C. John and Stuart Butler
The Heritage Foundation
Washington, D.C.

The conservative argument for USA accounts is not that they are a substitute for letting individuals invest their Social Security contributions; it is that they help create the political precondition for reform by bringing millions of workers into the pro-market investing class.

Some of the objections to this course are just silly. The argument about bureaucratic duplication could be made against any tax cut designed to boost savings. Similarly, any tax cut would be vulnerable to the objection that it is "an invitation to tax increases" when the government goes into the red. Accepting this canard would turn conservatives into tax collectors for the entitlement state.

The fear that USA accounts will at some point be repealed contradicts the fear that they will become a metastasizing entitlement. And even if all funding of the accounts stopped, previous deposits would still be accumulating interest. The claim that USA accounts aren't progressive enough is untrue—the government deposits a tax credit into the accounts whether or not the individual puts up money—and bizarre, coming from conservatives.

The strongest point against the accounts is that Clinton has not stipulated that they be privately managed. But the answer is for the Republican Congress to make the necessary specifications. No doubt Messrs. John and Butler could devise a better proposal. But they seem to think that Congress is capable of passing a bold overhaul of Social Security but not of tweaking Clinton's idea. That's a dubious political judgment. —RP

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■ FOR THE RECORD ■

■ Vice President **Al Gore**: "The purpose of life is to glorify God. I turn to my faith as the bedrock of my approach to any important question in life." . . . **Tipper Gore** describes her husband on *Today* show: "Handsome, sexy, a little reserved. Watch out, America!". . . **Hillary Clinton**, in CBS interview with **Dan Rather**: "I am very committed to learning about a lot of different issues I've worked on all my life and how they affect people in New York." . . . **Dick Morris**, on Hillary veering toward campaign announcement: "This is the first candidacy I know of that has to start with a housewarming party." . . . Next **Webster Hubbell** trial set to begin August 9, with Mrs. Clinton considered a potential witness.

■ **Pat Buchanan**, Texas governor **George W. Bush**, **Elizabeth Dole**, and **Dan Quayle** benefit from name recognition in Pew Research Center poll, but other Republicans are much less well known: **Gary Bauer** (18 percent), Ohio Rep. **John Kasich** (21 percent), Arizona Sen. **John McCain** (32 percent), **Lamar Alexander** (47 percent), and **Steve Forbes** (71 percent). . . . In Gallup poll, 40 percent say they are "not at all likely" to vote for Gore, and 15 percent say "not too likely." In 1987, only 19 percent said same about then vice president Bush. . . . Internet surfers flock to anti-George W. Bush website (www.gwbush.com) after governor publicly criticizes creation of 26-year-old **Zack Exley** for resembling his own page (www.georgewbush.com) too closely: "There ought to be limits to freedom. We're aware of the site and this guy is just a garbage man." Gore parody (www.allgore.com) attracts less attention. . . . In CNN/*Time* poll, Bush continues to lead Gore in match-up, 54 percent to 41 percent. . . . Alexander and Quayle lay off staff, blame fundraising problems. . . . Sen. Bob Smith (R., N.H.) says GOP is too hostile to conservatives, threatens to run for president as third-party candidate.

■ "I'd be proud to vote for tax increases for schools. You bet I would," says House minority leader **Dick Gephardt**, according to *Philadelphia Inquirer*. "You've got to have a combination of taking it out of the defense budget and raising revenue." . . . **Gloria Matta Tuchman**, co-author of California's Prop. 227 banning bilingual education, announces challenge to Rep. **Loretta Sanchez** (D., Calif.). . . . Oakland mayor **Jerry Brown** says attempt to unionize teachers in California charter school "violates the whole spirit of charter schools, and it turns the whole idea of a parent-teacher-controlled learning environment upside down. It's absolutely

Matt—Rothco Syndicate

unacceptable, and I intend to fight it with everything at my command." . . . Enactment of American Association of Retired Persons legislative agenda, as described in AARP publication, would add $944 billion in new annual spending to federal budget, according to National Taxpayers Union Foundation. . . .Census Bureau seeks additional $1.7 billion in funding to comply with Supreme Court restrictions on statistical sampling. . . . Proposal to double presidential pay in 2001 faces 2-to-1 opposition in Pew Research survey.

■ Portrait of Robert E. Lee removed from Richmond, Va., riverfront development after city-council member compares Confederate general to Nazi leaders. . . . Eight years after **Rodney King** riots, 89 percent of whites and 82 percent of blacks in Los Angeles say they are satisfied with police, in Department of Justice survey. . . . **Sergei Khrushchev**, son of Soviet leader **Nikita**, prepares to take U.S. citizenship exam in Providence, R.I. . . . Senate votes to restore ranks of **Husband E. Kimmel** and **Walter C. Short**, commanders at Pearl Harbor demoted after Japanese attack in 1941. . . . Rock star **Gary Cherone**, lead singer of Van Halen, criticizes popular Pearl Jam crooner **Eddie Vedder** for pro-abortion views. . . . Montana's state legislature imposes 75-miles-per-hour speed limits on interstate highways, which previously did not have any. . . . Maine's Department of Human Services plans to yank license of Jaricot Foster Home for mentally retarded adults because it bans pornography and sex. . . . "Roughly one-fifth of the non-fundamentalist public hold intensely antagonistic sentiments toward fundamentalists," says *Public Opinion Quarterly*, with ill will concentrated among the highly educated and secular.

■ Tories in United Kingdom signal that they will run a "keep the pound" campaign against adopting the euro in next round of parliamentary elections, due by 2002. . . . **Henry Kissinger**: The U.S. should withdraw from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty if Russia does not agree to change it because "it may have had a limited theoretical sense in a two-power nuclear world, but in a multi-nuclear world, it is reckless." . . . Pakistani information minister **Mushahid Hussein**: "If we didn't have the bomb, India would have occupied Kashmir by now." . . . Azerbaijan complains about Chinese selling missiles to Armenia, in deal brokered by Moscow. . . . Israeli decision to enlarge Jewish settlement on West Bank effectively cuts any Palestinian state in half. . . . Romania announces it will permit publication of Communist-era secret-service materials and let citizens see their files.

■ As federal government conducts research on whether honeybees can be trained to detect landmines, Animal Protection Institute complains that insects "shouldn't be forced into military service" because they "aren't U.S. citizens," reports *Los Angeles Times*. **NR**

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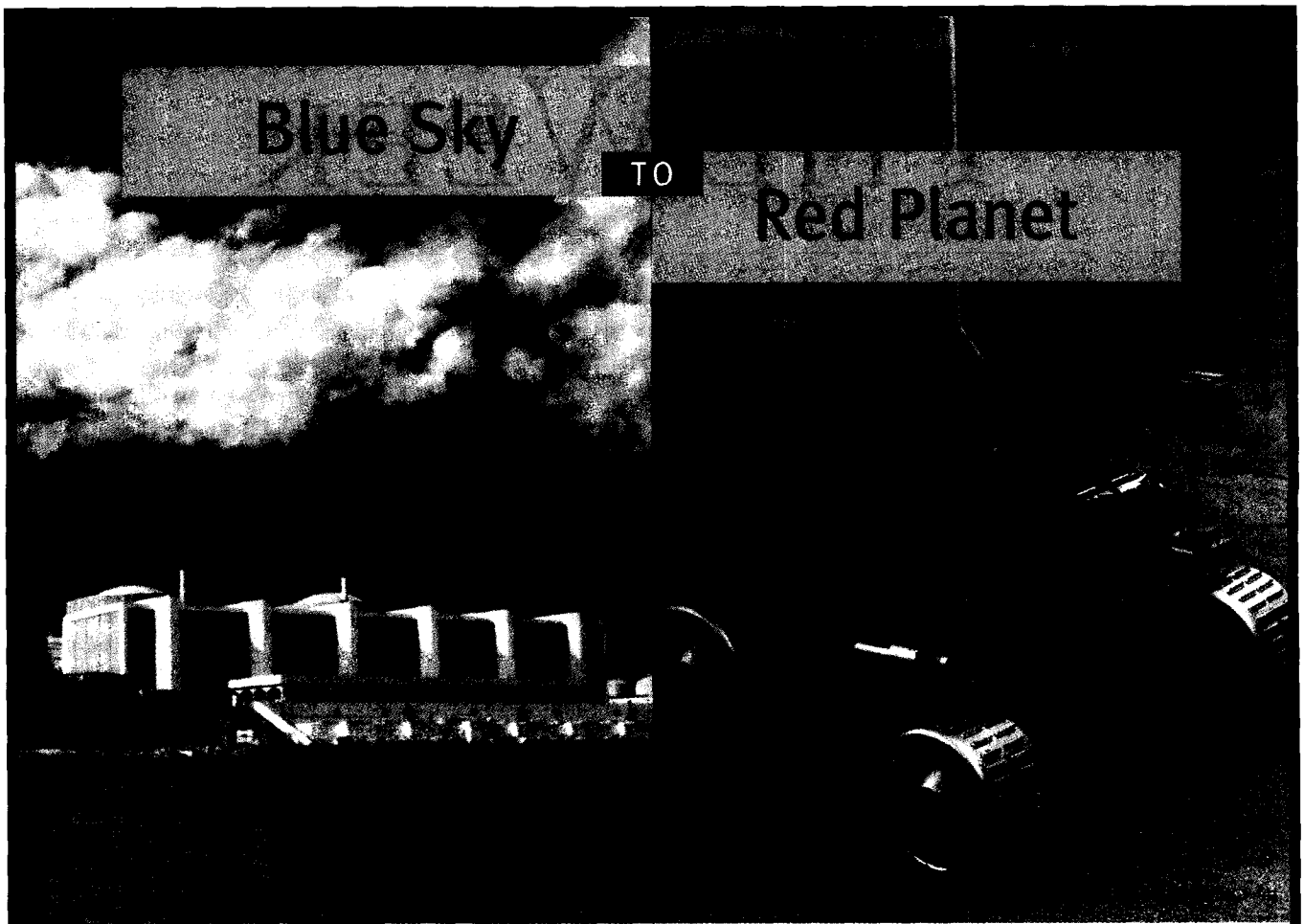

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THE WEEK

■ Barney Frank has an interview in the current *Playboy*, along with "The Girls of Hawaiian Tropic." Think of it as coalition-building.

■ George W. Bush is touting the budget he recently signed into law as a triumph of compassionate conservatism that demonstrates he is ready for the White House. Really? The good news is that Bush cut property and business taxes by $2 billion over two years. But this achievement must be measured against a $6 billion surplus. Spending is scheduled to rise from $89 to $98 billion over the next two years. Much of this spending will go to raising teacher pay—the biggest component of Bush's vaunted education reforms. This step is popular, but there is no reason to believe it will do anything at all to improve student achievement. Teacher pay has risen for the last 20 years without such an effect, and many private schools manage to perform better than public schools despite paying lower salaries. It's a decent finish to the legislative session. But the fact that Republicans are congratulating Bush so heartily suggests that their expectations for him aren't so high after all.

■ So why aren't more people outraged by the Clinton administration's lackadaisical approach to Chinese espionage? Maybe because they haven't heard about it. Brent Bozell's Media Research Center points out that the top three networks treated the Cox report as a one-day story. NBC's coverage was typical: The *Nightly News* ran a story the day the report was released, and the next morning *Today* interviewed two Democrats on the subject—and that's it. No attempt to push the story forward. No grim anchors on the White House lawn saying, day after day, "The administration continues to be dogged by serious allegations . . ." The only way to get the media to do their job may be to elect a Republican president.

■ When congressional Republicans struck a budget deal with Bill Clinton in 1997, we protested that its "spending limits" were much too high and predicted that, even so, they would quickly be surpassed. Two years later, Republicans are engaged in the delicate task of pretending to adhere to those limits while preparing to break them. Still at issue: whether to raid Social Security to fund other domestic programs, which Republicans even yesterday pledged not to do, or to raid the defense budget instead. It does not help that the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, Pete Domenici of New Mexico, is also the chairman of one of the appropriations subcommittees designed for the sole purpose of spending money. Come to think of it, the entire budget-writing process was designed by Democrats to promote bigger government. No surprise, then, that Republicans are behaving like Democrats.

■ Mrs. Clinton has taken the first steps in offering herself to the voters of New York as a candidate for the Senate. Why on earth are the Democrats so gleeful? Consider the possible outcomes. Alternative One: Her non-moderation, non-residence, and non-warmth will generate a winning turnout for Mayor Giuliani, an old hat, or whomever the GOP puts up. Alternative Two: New Yorkers will revert to liberal type—this, after all, is the state that produced Nelson Rockefeller, Jacob Javits, and John Lindsay, and they were *Republicans*—and put her in the Senate, in which case the Democrats will suffer through years of rehashing the Clinton legacy, feverishly chattering about 2004, and experiencing the balm of the Mrs.'s personality.

■ For two years, Orrin Hatch, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, resisted conservative entreaties that he force a political debate on judicial imperialism rather than rubber-stamp Clinton's nominees. That would be too radical, he said, and would politicize the judiciary. Now Hatch is holding up all of Clinton's nominees—but only because Clinton refuses to nominate a Hatch ally, the chief of staff to Utah governor Mike Leavitt, for a district-court vacancy. Hatch may well be tempted to make a deal in which Clinton yields and he agrees to confirm Clinton's nominees to the far more important courts of appeals. If Hatch must have this judgeship, he should charge it to Clinton for services rendered.

■ New York City police officer Justin Volpe pleaded guilty to torturing Haitian immigrant Abner Louima; by the time these words appear, the jury will probably have ruled on the cops who allegedly colluded with him, and lied about it. Justice done? Not according to the city's racial profiteers. They do not object to lying per se (Al Sharpton still endorses Tawana Brawley's fantasies), nor are they strangers to violence (one of Sharpton's colleagues in protest killed half a dozen shoppers at the white-owned Freddie's Fashion Mart in Harlem). What they cannot abide is a white mayor who has ignored their theatrics while bringing down the number of homicides by 1,600 per year. What New Yorkers must fear is a shift from crime-fighting to racial posturing and moral paralysis. That will lead, as it did throughout the Seventies, Eighties, and early Nineties, to disorder and death.

■ When the Florida legislature passed Gov. Jeb Bush's school-choice plan—which gives scholarships to kids in the state's

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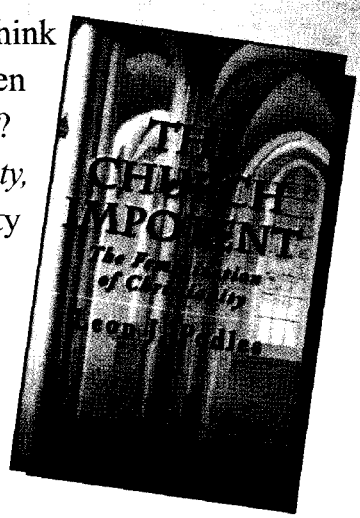

" 'Male and female he created them.' Leon Podles reminds us of the full meaning and mystery of these words, which have been forgotten in our time, when both sexes have been debased and turned against each other by ideologies of 'feminism,' 'liberation,' and 'sexual freedom.' *The Church Impotent* explains the divine harmony between true patriarchy and true femininity as created by our heavenly Father. We can only be grateful for Dr. Podles' lucid effort to repair our understanding of Christian truth."

— ***Joseph Sobran***
Nationally syndicated columnist

"By documenting and criticizing the long-term feminization of Western Christianity, Leon Podles has written a major book — one that has identified a fundamental challenge for the Church in this coming century, namely how to bring men back to the Faith. Church leaders ignore this challenge only at great risk."

— ***Paul C. Vitz***
Professor of Psychology,
New York University

"*The Church Impotent* gives us perhaps the most impressive set of arguments and evidence ever assembled against The Church Feminine. Conservatives of any stripe won't be able to ignore Podles, and Christians would be foolish not to add his eye-opening book to their armory."

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worst schools—it took the teacher unions to see the connection to the atrocities in Yugoslavia. "Bush and the legislature are no more interested in fairness for education than President Milosevic is interested in fairness for the Kosovar Albanians," charged union president Maureen Dinnen. In Pennsylvania, meanwhile, 14 school superintendents responded to Gov. Tom Ridge's school-choice proposal by warning that "the current war in Kosovo is a graphic example of what happens in a society that separates its people and fosters elitism" and that school choice "may lead to the Balkanization of our society." In New Mexico, an education-school official told the legislature that "voucher programs could end up resembling the ethnic cleansing now occurring in Kosovo." It's a good thing the education establishment can't send in the Air Force.

■ The spring of 1989 was an astonishing time: Communist regimes in Eastern Europe were falling like seedpods, and there were signs of stirring in China. Americans of goodwill began to dream that the worst errors of this century might be erased in time for the start of the next one. But then, on June 3 and 4, Deng Xiaoping dispersed and killed the demonstrators in Tiananmen Square in Beijing. China's rulers continue to address politics and their past in the language of party dictatorship; deferring the day of reckoning, they increase the likelihood that it will be bloody. The Chinese, and the world, can cherish the memory of the aborted upwelling, and its greatest image: that of the single man who stood in front of the file of armor, and would not give way.

■ Nelson Mandela, South Africa's first post-apartheid president, had a more successful term than many conservatives expected. The Soviet Union vanished at just the right time—after long years of supporting the African National Congress, but just before Mandela took power. Mandela's dignity reassured opponents and gratified supporters. Thabo Mbeki, Mandela's successor, must now address the country's practical problems: rampant crime, ANC-fostered corruption, and widespread temptations to loot the nation's wealth-creators. He will face a small but scrappy opposition, spearheaded by the Democratic party, mostly Anglo liberals who wooed the Afrikaaner vote by pugnacious harping on individual rights. Against all odds, a new regime got itself born. Now it needs hard work as well as grace and luck.

■ Spike Lee never apologizes, but he did what, for him, is the next best thing: He asserted that no one should have taken offense when he said that a proper response to school violence would be to shoot NRA president Charlton Heston. "I was only joking," Lee explained. Okay, but next time you joke, try to make it a little, you know, funnier?

■ Bryan Rudnick, publisher of Brandeis University's conservative publication, *Freedom Magazine*, is the scourge of the student senate. He has criticized that august body for, among other things, being more interested in résumé-padding than the welfare of students. In response, student senators have challenged Rudnick to a fistfight, destroyed hundreds of copies of the magazine—and now voted to rescind the magazine's funding. One senator explained, "This has nothing to do with freedom of speech." So will silencing dissent look good on a résumé?

■ Hugo Sonnenschein, president of the University of Chicago, is leaving after his attempts to make it more like everywhere else fizzled. Sonnenschein wanted to trim the core curriculum and boost enrollment. He also printed bright brochures to persuade potential applicants that life at Chicago was not grim and demanding. In fact, it is both: The weather ensures the former; the ideals of the institution, as embodied over the years by faculty such as Mortimer Adler, Allan Bloom, and Saul Bellow, ensure the latter. One of the most gratifying aspects of Sonnenschein's abbreviated tenure was the opposition he provoked from students: In April, 1,700 people (almost a fifth of the student body) attended a "fun-in," satirizing his efforts. Kids interested in a party school will have to stick with the University of Miami.

■ Is broccoli revolutionary? The labor-Left mag *In These Times* says yes, in a breathless profile of El Bambú, a government-run vegetarian restaurant in Cuba's National Botanical Garden. There the staff lovingly "cooks a little environmental sustainability into every meal." No fossil fuels are used—the cooking is done with reflected sunlight and fallen tree branches. Leftovers are fed to worms and turned into

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compost. The locals haven't exactly taken to the place yet, but just wait. "Under socialism," explains author Travis Lea, "market forces that support the meat industry in other countries are simply not present."

KOSOVO

Pax Clintonia

If the June 3 Kosovo peace accord is implemented, the West will have achieved as much as anyone could reasonably have expected. President Clinton can take credit for his persistence—and particularly for resisting the pressure from many congressional Republicans to give peace, or at least Slobodan Milosevic, one more chance. Sen. John McCain, an honorable exception among Republicans, also deserves the plaudits he has received for filling the leadership vacuum in his party and his country. The allies, too, were admirably steadfast.

But the success is surprising less because the achievement is so impressive than because expectations were so low. Until the final weeks of the conflict, the West followed a self-limiting strategy that seemed designed for failure. Even now the results of that strategy are evident in the weaknesses of the accord:

1. Kosovo might end up a protectorate of the United Nations, not of NATO. This is not a trivial point, since it would mean that the Russians and Chinese would have a veto over the composition of the peacekeeping force as well as its rules of engagement.

2. The peacekeepers are to "demilitarize" the Kosovo Liberation Army, which could pit NATO against the Albanian Kosovars it originally intervened to protect—a particularly ironic outcome since it was the KLA that helped drive Milosevic to the negotiating table.

3. The accord allows some "hundreds" of Serbian "personnel" to stay in Kosovo to perform certain tasks, including border control. The accord does not stipulate that they be unarmed, and they may well intimidate returning refugees.

4. Milosevic has a record of wriggling out of agreements. Any halt to NATO bombing will make it all the easier for him by vastly reducing our leverage.

The test of success will be whether most of the refugees trust the final arrangements enough to return home. If so, NATO can congratulate itself for at least reversing the ethnic purge it failed to prevent in the first place. If not, Milosevic will have achieved his main objective. Our victory will then be a phony one.

Even a real victory would be dangerous if the West concluded that humanitarian interventions can succeed on the cheap. Critics, including us, may have underestimated the impact of a high-tech bombing campaign against the infrastructure of a developed society. But the critics were right to insist that a change in the balance of forces on the ground was indispensable. That change was effected by the KLA, finally given close air support by NATO, and by the belated threat of a ground attack by NATO itself.

The air-war strategy was also morally defective. The imperative to avoid military casualties was put before, first, the objectives of the war, and then the lives of Serb and even Albanian Kosovar civilians. Bureaucratic, political, and diplomatic concerns were elevated above military efficacy. The fact that foolish gambles sometimes pay off does not make them any less foolish.

Finally, the ends as well as the means of this war deserve scrutiny. It is good that most liberals have overcome their qualms about military force; but their support is still divorced from strategic judgment. Along with some neoconservatives, they are eager to treat the outcome in the Balkans—a provisional outcome, lest we forget—as a vindication for a humanitarian interventionism whose limits have not been specified. The new doctrine, which sweeps aside national sovereignty in the name of human rights, is already bringing a host of unfortunate consequences in train: the politically selective pursuit and prosecution of former dictators in defiance of their countries' wishes, an international criminal court that claims "universal jurisdiction" (including over Americans), and the elevation of the U.N. Security Council as a source of legitimacy for American military action. It is far from clear whether the erosion of sovereignty will improve the international order or just unravel it. Our victory in Kosovo will be Pyrrhic indeed if it is taken as a model.

William Napoleon Clinton

The President, it will be said,
While Nervous Nellies quaked in bed,
Led like the sainted Wallace when
His troops downed mounted Englishmen.
Some may not lay it on this thick,
But on a Sunday show, the trick
Is being firstest with the most.
This can be trying for the host.

—W. H. von Dreele

CULTURE WATCH

The Use of Memory

The *New York Times* celebrated Memorial Day by publishing an op-ed describing a visit to Gettysburg by Allen B. Ballard, a black novelist and history professor. Though slight in itself, Ballard's essay represents larger confusions.

Ballard says that what he felt on the battlefield was "emotional detachment," but that is wrong. His emotions are still very engaged; they are almost all negative. The reason for his hostility is that all of the contestants were white men—black volunteers who came up from Philadelphia to fight for the Union were turned away—and half of them were Confederates. At one

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smart enough talk

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point Ballard curses the "slavery-spreading soul[s]" of the Confederate soldiers, though he then asks the Lord to forgive him.

Ballard's feelings seem to be widespread among blacks, and validated by the larger society (e.g., the *New York Times*). They are not difficult to understand: Slave owners were of course racists, as was everybody else. So even northern abolitionists do not escape censure—witness the jokes at their expense in Steven Spielberg's *Amistad*. Presidents who were slaveholders have their names taken off high schools, even if (like George Washington, who was removed from a school in New Orleans) they freed all their slaves.

The immediate problem with such attitudes is emotional. If indeed blacks feel no sympathy for the American story, then why should whites care about the black part of that story? Let's junk Martin Luther King Day, take *Native Son* out of the high-school curriculums, and be done with it. This will never happen at the level of policy—and should never—but such thoughts will rankle and fester.

What the spirit of vengeful judgment most damages, however, is our sense of history. It fails to understand the past in its own terms. Twenty-three thousand Union soldiers were killed, wounded, or missing in action at Gettysburg. Surely this counts for more in the scale of effort than the fact that they practiced battlefield segregation. If Allen Ballard doesn't know what side they were on, the frustrated black volunteers did. That's why they tried to join it.

But to understand history is to understand its contradictions. Those who lost—and should have lost—history's struggles often had mixed motives, and leave mixed legacies. The American-born poet T. S. Eliot, writing about the English civil war, said he did so not to "revive old factions. . . . Whatever we inherit from the fortunate/ We have taken from the defeated/ What they had to leave us—a symbol:/ A symbol perfected in death."

We must honor our sufferings, but to be ruled by them is to suffer them still. "This," Eliot wrote, "is the use of memory: For liberation . . ."

APPRECIATION

Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, R.I.P.

In April, his letter told that he would be leaving his home in Austria for four days. A conference in Montreal would be discussing the monarchy, and Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn would certainly not miss that. "But in May I must be operated on for my aneurysm—being born in 1909 this is a very *dangerous* operation. (I am spiritually ready to meet the Lord; on the other hand I am at the top of my productivity.) Pray for me. Yours ever, Erik. P.S. Thank you for your friendship!"

Some months before NATIONAL REVIEW's first issue was published I met with Max Eastman. He asked if I had read *Liberty or Equality?* by Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn. As it happened, I had just then read it. "Amazing!" Eastman, the learned essayist, critic, and philosopher, remarked. "Reading it is like going to college and graduate school, all over again." I agreed and signed Mr. Leddihn on for a weekly column. My affinity for the mind of K-L was long-lived. His column on European political, moral, and philosophical affairs appeared in NATIONAL REVIEW for 35 years. John O'Sullivan discontinued it—K-L was a special taste, baroque, discursive, history-besotted.

His mind was more fully stocked than that of anyone I have ever known. Not merely in the $64,000 Question sense, the wandering scholar who can tell you the dates of the Second Peloponnesian War. K-L would tell you why those years particularly *mattered!*, and by the time the salad was served, he'd have got around to analyzing the impact of the war on the thinking of Aquinas *after* he had assimilated Aristotle.

There was never (that I know of) a mind better fixed on the reticulations that, if diligently pursued, would take you from Mother Teresa to Sister Boom Boom. He knew everything and wanted to tell you everything he knew; and this was sometimes a social problem in an evening with Erik. The wry poet Roy Campbell told me that when Erik stayed with him and his wife in their apartment in London, "we took him in shifts."

There was the temptation to think him an exhibitionist, but that was short-lived. The exhibitionist cares only to display his knowledge. Erik sought to put his knowledge to the service of a set of ideas which centered on the reasons for human liberty. He now and again took obvious delight in a historical or linguistic bon mot (he spoke with a German accent; and was at home in seven languages) but only because he knew the company would share in his delight. He was never showing off. He simply felt a compulsion to tell everybody everything. In his personal life he was avidly frugal. "Why do you travel Third Class?" I asked him when he arrived for a visit on the local. "Because there is no Fourth Class," he explained. The check for an appearance before the Harvard Foreign Relations Society caught up with him. It was for twenty-five dollars. He replied, "If the check you sent me is intended as a gratuity for my speech, it is too little. If it is intended as a tip, I don't take tips."

In the early Eighties I wrote a novel about Berlin. K-L liked the novel and sent along a pleasant single-spaced four-page letter wherein he engagingly pointed out seventy or eighty errors, traceable to historical solecisms, proper names improperly attributed to characters from that particular region of Germany, misleading street addresses . . . I was both appalled (at the accumulation) and amused (by the arcana he had collected). I wrote asking permission to publish his letter in "Notes & Asides," my little corner of NATIONAL REVIEW. He wrote back instantly.

Under no circumstances was I to do any such thing!—the letter had been only for my own instruction. A year later I undertook to show the letter to a friend as a roguish display of K-L's voluminous knowledge, but I couldn't find it. Would

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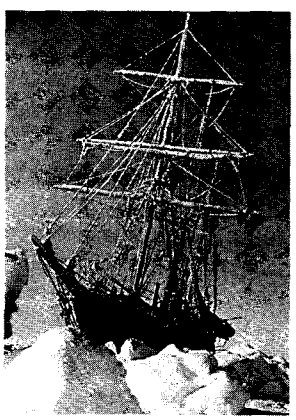

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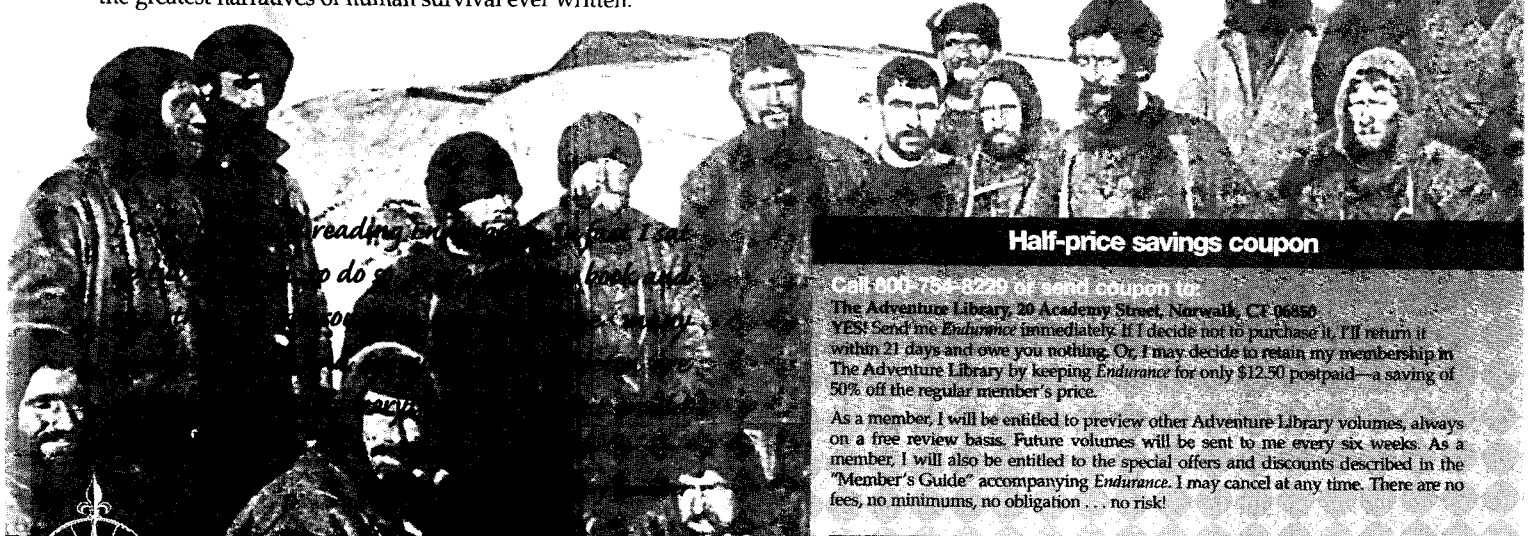

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he be so good as to send me a copy? I wrote him. He hadn't kept one. That letter was a mere doodle for Erik, and he doodled all the time, with his exuberant erudition.

The last letter, late in May, was pure Erik. "Dear Bill: I am still alive and thank you ever so much for your letter! [When writing in English he used exclamation points and italics and capital letters profusely.] We'll meet in heaven." Then, after that sublime thought, on to the business of the world. "The articles in NATIONAL REVIEW on Kosovo very interesting—but NO relation to the *Balkan mind*. The thing was *botched* from the beginning onward. *Everything* was wrongly handled. In my FALSCHGESTELLTE WEIGHEN (1985) I foresaw the Kosovo trouble. Remember what Russell Kirk wrote in ENEMIES OF THE PERMANENT THINGS, page 391. Very interesting the booklist [the 100 best non-fiction books of the century] in the NR of May 3rd. That my own books are omitted is what I expected. But some second rate books are listed. Many good Austrians but nearly no Germans and very few Russians, Italians, Spaniards. Missing: SPENGLER, BERDYAYEV, UNAMUNO, MOSCA, PARETO, KEYSERLING, CHR. DAWSON, E. I. WATKIN (more brilliant than Dawson), SANTAYANA, SOROKIN, RUSTOW, ROEPKE. So I am in good company."

That is certainly so, if indeed he is now in Heaven, which none of us who knew him would ever doubt.

—WFB

■ NOTES & ASIDES ■

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: It all started nearly four years ago when I placed a classified advertisement in NR. To my delight, I received one particularly fascinating reply. Letter followed letter. Almost two years later, the lady in question traveled from Anchorage to Boston to visit a brother who had moved here. At the end of two weeks, I proposed to her. She made me the happiest of men by accepting. We set a date for July 1999.

Had it not been for you and NR, I do not believe my present happiness would be nearly as complete. Hence, the enclosed invitation. We would be delighted if you, John O'Sullivan, and Tony Savage could come.

Very truly yours,
George T. De Angelo Jr.
Salem, Mass.

Dear Mr. De Angelo: That is simply splendid news, and I congratulate you and the heiress presumptive. That is a jolly invitation and I think all of us should go! I hope you have facilities for 200,000.

Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: Re your response regarding a mens rea for murder:

I thought you might want to know that there are some categories of murder that do not require a mens rea. The two most well known are felony murder and "depraved indifference" murder.

A felony murder occurs when someone is killed in the course of a felony and all perpetrators of the felony are considered equally guilty of murder even though none of them intended that anyone die. In some states, if a shopkeeper defends himself against a robbery and shoots one of the robbers, the other robbers might be prosecuted for felony murder because of the death of somebody during the robbery.

"Depraved indifference" murder occurs when a death results from actions evincing a depraved indifference to human life. The classic example is when someone is struck and killed by a car driven at high speed through a crowded area. Another example might be when someone sets fire to an occupied building because he likes to see flames burning, but never once thought about what might happen to the people inside.

Hope this is of interest and gives you some additional perspective on the Diallo shooting.

Yours truly,
Gary Greenberg
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Greenberg: A nice summary, thanks. Would a pilot loosing a bomb over Kosovo that ends by killing an innocent civilian be guilty of depraved indifference? Interesting question, though I'd vote no, and defend myself against subsequent charges of engaging in casuistry.

Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: There are some persons who, as they grow old, become increasingly alarmed by social disorder, ranging from crime to bad grammar in newspapers. You are one of those persons. If a law is passed, I will not report to a government place and give my DNA; I will not be treated like that.

You used to be somewhat libertarian. You have become authoritarian. Too bad.

Dan Althoff
Atlantic Beach, Fla.

Dear Mr. Althoff: How old are *you*?

Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: What ever happened to the practice of referring to countries as "she" rather than "it"? In abandoning this practice, we lose a tremendous richness and poetry in our language.

Perhaps NR could lead the way in restoring the use of "she" and "her" rather than "it."

Yours,
Christopher Blunt
Chatsworth, Calif.

Dear Mr. Blunt: "Spain Declares War on France." Gentleman at club, newspaper in hand, turns to other gentleman at club: "Why would she want to do that to her?" . . . I think not.

Cordially, —WFB

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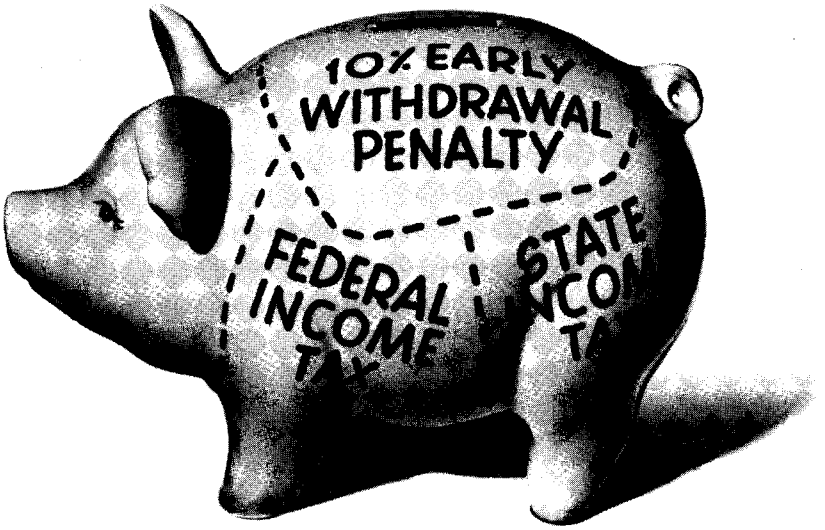

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■ KOSOVO ■

Just War. Just Means?

The problem with zero casualties.

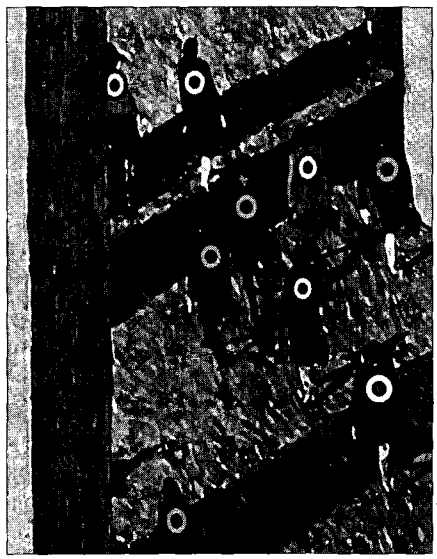
ELLIOTT ABRAMS

NATO's Balkan bombing campaign was victorious, more or less, but there may be as much relief in the West as in Belgrade that it is ending. Given that NATO was imposing, but not taking, casualties, why that reaction? There was broad public outrage in the West against ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and equally broad support for this humanitarian intervention. Why then the sense that not only the Serbs, but we as well, have had a lucky escape?

Steven Rosenfeld, writing in the *Washington Post*, offered this extraordinary analysis: "It turned out that the principal shortage . . . was of viable military and economic targets. Serbia being . . . a small, middle-level country, the number of these began to run short. The gap was made up by verging into targets that could be hit only by putting civilians at extra risk. Still, the end of the war came before the NATO publics revolted against the collateral civilian kill."

This is strong language, but it points to the fundamental humanitarian problem of the Kosovo war: How was it that an intervention whose goal was to prevent ethnic cleansing and the creation of refugees from Kosovo failed so miserably at that, then became a campaign to inflict pain on Serbia's economy rather than on its army? In a total war such as World War II, these questions barely arise: Germany's and Japan's armies and economies were equally legitimate targets. But Kosovo was that new breed, the "humanitarian intervention." How did we get from stopping ethnic cleansing in Kosovo to bombing bridges and electric plants in Serbia?

Some analysts have called this war a great achievement for air power, and the redoubtable John Keegan has written that "the outcome is a victory for air power and air power alone." He has moreover called it "a victory for the New World Order," for "there are now no places on earth that cannot be subjected to the same relentless harrowing that the Serbs have suffered in the past six weeks," which has been "inflicted by aircraft operating from carriers at sea or by others flying direct from the United States." Thus "would-be Milosevics around the world will have to reconsider their plans."



Bob Bukin

But Keegan is casting us in a new role: While once we were the "arsenal of democracy," he now sees us as the world's purveyor of "relentless" bombing campaigns. It is an honor we may wish to refuse. For one thing, it isn't at all clear he is right about air power: Milosevic gave in, it seems, only when NATO threatened a ground war. If that is true, then President Clinton's decision to consider ground forces only in June after publicly rejecting them in March caused unnecessary human suffering. Whatever effect the bombing campaign had on Milosevic, it certainly didn't prevent the brutalities suffered by a million Kosovars. And it ended up, as Rosenfeld acknowledged, aiming at targets in Serbia that were collateral to the war effort in Kosovo.

If we acted out of humanitarian motives, what went wrong? The answer is that President Clinton and our NATO allies willed the ends but not the means—and that gap was filled with Serbian economic targets. We refused to interpose our troops between the Serbian soldiers and their Kosovar civilian victims. We chose instead a means that guaranteed very low American casualties, at the price of vastly inflating the damage done in Serbia and Kosovo. In the context of a "humanitarian" intervention, this was a problematic choice. It was not novel, for we have been doing this in the Balkans all along: too little too late. Our intervention in Bosnia was of the same character, and there we were treated to the sight of NATO troops refusing to capture indicted war criminals and refusing to act when the Serbs violated clear promises they had made to respect safe havens. Our intervention in Kosovo came with clear pledges not to deploy ground troops, which can only have emboldened Milosevic and prolonged the suffering.

The lesson of this entire episode is not that humanitarian intervention is wrong, but that, like all forms of war, it requires a resolute will to win and a decision to commit whatever forces are needed to win—and the sense to resist intervening if our goals are unachievable at a price we are willing to pay. Our intervention in Haiti in 1994 was nearly risk-free, but its goal of "restoring democracy" was simply beyond our capacity given the realities of life and politics on that unhappy island. In the Gulf War, President Bush did match our military means to his goal of expelling the Iraqis from Kuwait (even if the proper goal was the removal of Saddam Hussein from power). In the Balkans, there was no doubt our forces could prevail, but no real willingness to take casualties. Thus the air war.

The victory against Serbia, inflicted with no casualties at all on our side (except in accidents), is likely to encourage us in future interventions. If the "lesson of Vietnam" is that everything may turn into a quagmire, the "lesson of Kosovo" may be the opposite: that

Mr. Abrams, an assistant secretary of state under President Reagan, is president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

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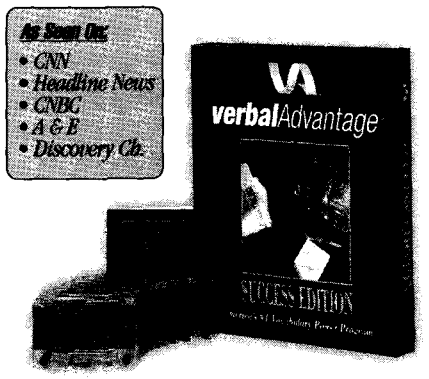

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humanitarian intervention is pretty cheap, morally rewarding, and an appropriate role for the United States as the world's leading democracy and its only great power.

But that lesson is too simple. Bill Clinton's insistence on escaping the hard choices in Kosovo gave succor to Milosevic, encouraged and permitted the ethnic cleansing of Kosovo, and contributed to a great humanitarian tragedy. While the administration will call the bombing campaign a successful humanitarian intervention (for in the end NATO forces will occupy Kosovo and protect refugees who may wish to return), in truth this was a failed substitute for a real humanitarian intervention that might have prevented mass murder, terror, and exile in the first place.

Humanitarian intervention is a militarily and morally complex decision. It requires calculations and balances of factors such as timing, means, goals, and chances of success. The picture of an America willing to make those moral calculations, and to risk its own resources and even its troops to prevent terrible crimes such as those committed in Kosovo, is an attractive one. This is a fitting role for a superpower that believes itself motivated by a commitment to democracy and world peace. The alternative picture, of a superpower willing to bomb but not to fight, willing to inflict a tremendous amount of pain on others to avoid the slightest risks to itself, under a leadership more sensitive to poll data than to the moral considerations involved in deciding which wars are just—that is a picture that should repel us.

Both pictures are being drawn today. Americans will reject the second, ugly portrait of their country, or say that it describes only Bill Clinton. But the issues presented by Kosovo—and by our decisions to intervene or not to intervene in the Gulf, Rwanda, Haiti, and Somalia—need far more careful consideration than this administration, Congress, or the American people have yet given them. There is no foreign-policy question more central in the post–Cold War world than when and how the United States should intervene in situations that are not, or not yet, clear threats to our national security. The Clinton years have only sharpened those questions, without answering any of them. NR

■ KOSOVO II ■

Victory Spoiled

Nothing to savor in Yugoslavia.

ANDREW J. BACEVICH

'NOTHING except a battle lost can be half so melancholy as a battle won." So wrote the Duke of Wellington in his dispatch from Waterloo in June 1815.

As the war over Kosovo approaches its denouement, the United States and its allies may perhaps be forgiven for wishing to ignore the Iron Duke's dour observation. That the Clinton administration, and the Gore campaign, tormented for weeks by the great sucking sound of a Balkan quagmire, will breathe a sigh of relief is understandable. Americans of all political persuasions rightly rejoice that the conflict ends with no U.S. combat fatalities and that Serbia's vicious campaign of ethnic cleansing has at last run its course.

Yet NATO's success in Kosovo should occasion sober reflection rather than euphoria. The legacy of this ill-conceived war will not lack for melancholy.

As with Operation Desert Storm in 1991, Operation Allied Force has the appearance of a decisive victory won cheaply. And as with that earlier war, events will expose this as an illusion.

With the American economy rocketing along and the federal budget in surplus, the war's immediate costs—estimated at $1.7 to 2.6 billion for the United States—might seem little more than pocket change. But add to that an estimated $2 to 3.5 billion in peacekeeping expenses annually (a sum that excludes the cost of reconstructing either Kosovo or Serbia as a whole) and within a few years you're talking about real money.

For that investment, the United States can anticipate only modest returns. In part this stems from that most fundamental of blunders: misidentifying the objective. Because of that miscalculation, the victory just achieved is partial and incomplete.

Its war aims held hostage by the imperatives of consensus, NATO never faced up to the fact that a politically meaningful outcome would require a change of regime in Belgrade. Calling off the war because Yugoslav authorities have agreed to withdraw from Kosovo is the equivalent of FDR and Churchill's declaring victory once the Wehrmacht had evacuated Paris.

As it is, Slobodan Milosevic, perpetrator of atrocities, indicted war criminal, and Hitler of the '90s, survives in power. As long as that remains the case, predictions that a cessation of hostilities will give way (in the language of the so-called peace agreement) to "democracy, economic prosperity, stability and regional cooperation" are pure cant. As a practical matter, Kosovo now becomes a protectorate that the United States and its allies will occupy, defend, police, and subsidize. Yugoslavia joins the roster of "rogue states" to be isolated, contained, and discomfited. Officials in Washington and Brussels will make much of the prospects that the Serbian people will throw off their political shackles. But the examples of Cuba, Iraq, and Libya among others offer little cause for optimism on that score. Keeping the peace in Kosovo promises to be yet another arduous, wearisome, near-interminable military commitment.

Worse, the war establishes precedents and reinforces expectations that may well prove to be positively mischievous.

By inserting themselves smack into the middle of a Balkan civil war, the United States and its allies put paid to the longstanding principle that constrained states from interfering in one another's internal affairs. In its place, a new principle has emerged: Henceforth, governments that gratuitously abuse their own citizens are subject to externally administered discipline. The protection afforded by traditional assertions of sovereignty no longer pertains.

Mr. Bacevich is professor of international relations at Boston University.

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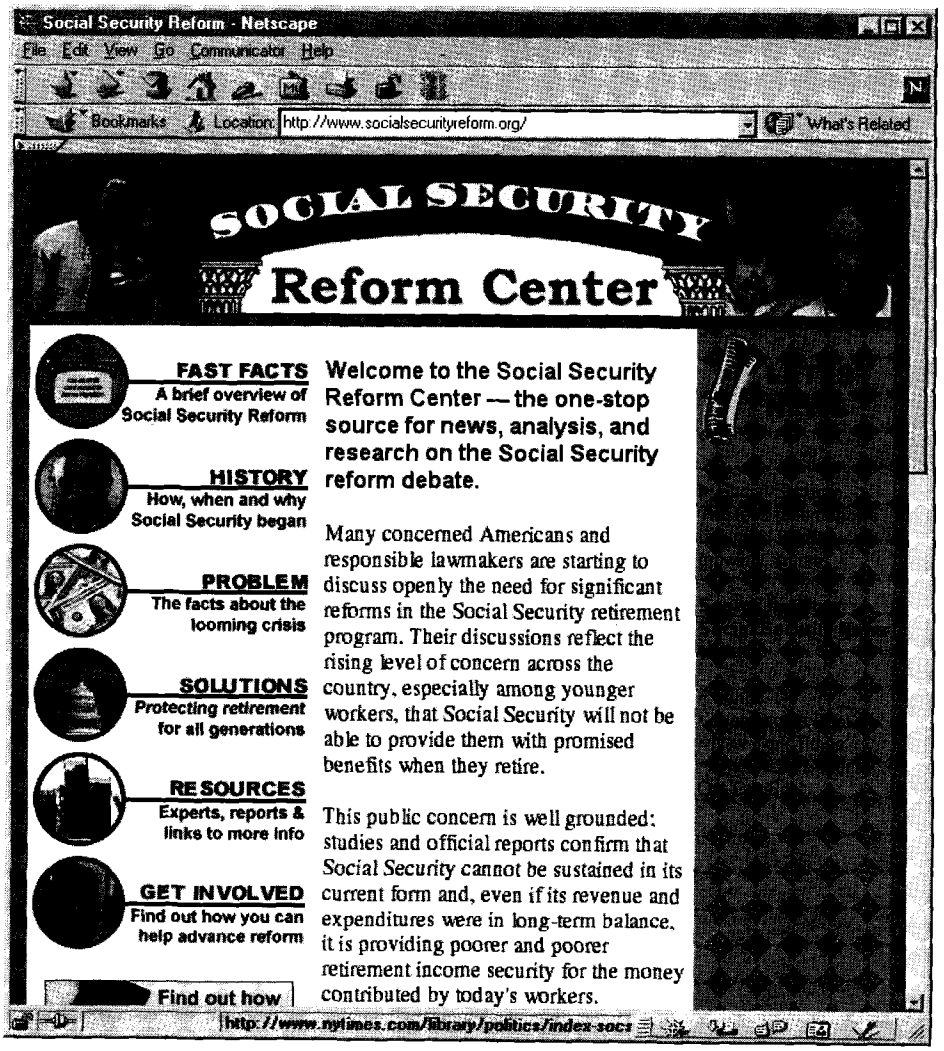
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The argument now begins over precisely when and how to apply this new prerogative—or is it an obligation?—to intervene. If relevant to Europe, why not to other quarters where brutality occurs even more frequently and on a larger scale? If the principle applies to human-rights violations by puny countries like Yugoslavia, why not to more important ones? The process of sorting out these questions promises to be a bloody one. To some observers, this is an exciting prospect. Contemplating the implications of Kosovo, Todd Gitlin, reformed antiwar activist turned crusader, observes that "just wars are not only possible but legion." Certain that their intentions are righteous, Americans can look forward to one, two, many Kosovos.

And why not, when we can do so virtually without risk? After all, relying

Americans can look forward to one, two, many Kosovos.

exclusively on air power, the United States prevailed in Kosovo without suffering a single casualty. At one wrenching moment during the war, it actually appeared that the cockpit of an American combat aircraft making bombing runs might be a safer place than an American high school.

In the skies over Serbia, strategic bombing seemingly came into its own, vindicating at long last the predictions of air enthusiasts going back to Billy Mitchell and Hap Arnold and apparently validating the prime military lesson of the 1990s. The decade that began with a massive air assault against Baghdad now concludes with another against Belgrade. Yet the importance of these two events can be understood only in relationship to a third: the disastrous firefight in the streets of Mogadishu in October 1993. That bloody failure and the firestorm it unleashed persuaded the Clinton administration that popular support for liberal internationalism, absent an overarching threat to U.S. security, stops short of a willingness actually to expend American lives. By contrast, the bombing of Iraq in 1991 had suggested that air power alone might permit the United States to accomplish its purposes while sustaining only minimal losses. In 1999, Operation Allied Force has provided a large-scale demonstration of this military doctrine. By exploiting its command of the air, the United States can, in the eyes of true believers, dominate the earth and shape its politics.

The war pitting NATO's 19 nations against Yugoslavia may indeed mark the first armed conflict won by air power alone: a true milestone in military history. But that achievement is not without qualification. It took ten weeks of bombing and 33,000 sorties to bring a very small country with a backward military to terms. Even then, according to NATO's own estimates, 90 percent of the Yugoslav army and 90 percent of Yugoslav tanks survived—and those figures are likely to overstate enemy losses, if experience is any guide.

NATO did not win by defeating the Yugoslav army, which, in rendering homeless a million Kosovars, accomplished at least one of its principal objectives. It won by inflicting misery on Serb society at large. Under a policy that targeted what was euphemistically known as "infrastructure," NATO destroyed Serbia's transportation system, crippled its productive capacity, and denied civilians electricity, water, and contact with the outside world. The real losers in this war were the noncombatants—on both sides. NATO failed to protect the Kosovar Albanians from assault by the Yugoslav army. The Yugoslav army failed to protect the people of Serbia from assault by NATO's air armada.

To note these parallel failures is not to suggest slyly a moral equivalency. It is to suggest, however, that the moral accounting of this war is more complicated than either NATO or the Clinton White House wishes to acknowledge. Otherwise a veritable fount of data, NATO has with great delicacy refrained from tabulating the number of civilians killed by its air campaign. That number matters a great deal, for it reflects one consequence of relying on high-altitude bombing to punish the wicked. Even in an era of precision weapons, strategic bombing translates inexorably into war against innocents and bystanders.

A new warrior emerges from this conflict: the highly skilled pilot of a B-2 Stealth bomber, flying from his base deep in the American heartland, entering the Balkan war zone without being detected, delivering satellite-guided ordnance to demolish an unseen target, and then returning safely home in time to take the kids to Little League or Burger King. The pilot is anonymous and is unaware of the effects achieved at the target area. Let us not burden him—or ourselves—with worrying about such things. For our cause is just and our intentions honorable. Surely others will respect that, and the bombs that turn bridges, factories, and apartment blocks into rubble will bring us the peace we seek.

Don't bet on it. **NR**

■ **LAW** ■

Wrong World Order

A new threat to American government.

ARCH PUDDINGTON

THE indictment of Slobodan Milosevic for crimes against humanity has been widely hailed as a blow against both the Serb leader and potential aggressors in the rest of the world. Some laud the action by the International War Crimes Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia because it ensures that Milosevic personally will be held accountable for the ethnic cleansing of Kosovo. Others are pleased by the tribunal's action precisely because, they believe, it will complicate negotiations and make it more difficult for President Clinton to agree to a settlement that amounts to something less than victory for NATO.

But the group that is perhaps the most

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pleased with the Milosevic indictment is composed of those who favor the expansion of international law into matters that traditionally have been resolved through negotiations between sovereign states. The advocates of an enhanced role for international law in the conduct of diplomacy had already seen their cause advanced by the establishment of an International Criminal Court last fall and the more recent attempt to place the former Chilean leader, Augusto Pinochet, on trial for crimes committed during his lengthy rule. With the Milosevic action, the question is no longer whether international law should supersede formal diplomacy, but in which cases and to what degree it should be invoked.

More to the point, the international-law idea can no longer be dismissed as a fringe phenomenon sustained by a tiny clique of cranks and utopians. The expansion of international law is today pressed forward by a global political movement. This movement has its ideologists in the lawyers and scholars who write treatises about the importance of global solutions to civilization's problems. And it has its activists in the extensive network of cause organizations that seek to globalize issues ranging from the prevention of war to discrimination against homosexuals to the international economy's impact on Third World development.

As is made clear by the above list, the international-law movement has a dual agenda. It seeks the full integration of human-rights law into international diplomacy while at the same time working to change domestic policies by invoking the standards set by international covenants as superior to the laws of sovereign states.

The contours of the debate over international law's role in foreign policy were spelled out during the debate over the International Criminal Court. Crucial to the refusal of the Clinton administration to sign the treaty was the fear that American soldiers could be indicted for vaguely defined war crimes. American apprehensions were clearly warranted: The ICC's definition of crimes against humanity is sufficiently wide-ranging to embrace the actions of every president from Roosevelt to Clinton. Furthermore, the court's supporters include those who have in the past accused American political figures of committing war crimes. Kenneth Roth, the director of Human Rights Watch, made a point of correcting a wire-service story that incorrectly quoted him as asserting that Americans had not committed crimes that come under the international court's jurisdiction. "In the past, American leaders have been responsible for such crimes," Roth declared, setting the record straight. Another Human Rights Watch official was less than reassuring when she wrote that it was unlikely that former President Bush could be indicted by the ICC since "the deaths of Iraqi civilians do not *necessarily* constitute a war crime" (italics added).

The Milosevic indictment can be supported because the war-crimes tribunal has been given a limited geographic and temporal jurisdiction, and a specific mandate—to say nothing of the very real atrocities for which Milosevic bears responsibility. The Pinochet case, however, is another story. It has potentially serious implications for countries where transitions to democracy require negotiations and compromise between the rulers and the ruled, such as in Nigeria or Indonesia. If the Nigerian military leaders who just handed power to a civilian government are subject to arrest and trial by Spain, France, or Switzerland (all of which have expressed interest in trying Pinochet), will other African despots follow the Nigerian example of ceding power to elected governments or conclude that a surrender of authority is too risky, owing to the possibility of indictment by a foreign judge? There is also the question of what constitutes crimes against humanity. Among the charges brought by the Spanish magistrate who issued the arrest warrant for Pinochet was that of genocide, something that shows just how elastic and subjective international law can be.

The international-law idea can no longer be dismissed as a fringe phenomenon.

But the problems raised by the Pinochet case are relatively minor when compared to the potential repercussions of the extension of international law into America's domestic affairs.

There is today a sizable body of international law enshrined in the various human-rights and environmental covenants that have been adopted under United Nations auspices during the past half-century. To most Americans, these covenants represent little more than an expression of noble ideals and general goals for a just society; the idea that an international covenant banning racial discrimination should supersede America's anti-bias laws would strike most as absurd, if not outrageous. America's political leadership has taken the public's attitude into account in adopting a cautious attitude towards international human-rights covenants. America has chosen not to sign several covenants, while Congress has proved unwilling to ratify other agreements that the executive branch has signed. And in cases where agreements have been ratified, Congress has added language which makes clear that, where international law clashes with domestic law, domestic law will prevail.

Yet many international-law experts argue that such reservations have no legal standing, and claim that international law shaped by a consensus of tyrannies and democracies alike takes precedence. It is thus unwise to assume that because the political climate is inhospitable to the erosion of domestic sovereignty today this condition will prevail in the future. An administration with a globalist perspective or a federal judiciary with a different ideological complexion could shift the current balance. The insinuation of international law into the American system could occur even without a shift in the nation's ideological balance. As Jeremy Rabkin has pointed out, the process could take place by stealth through a few judicial decisions that cite international law as one among several factors in a decision to, say, prevent logging in an environmentally sensitive area.

It is inevitable that pressure will increase for America to bring its laws and practices into conformance with international human-rights law. How, then, should our political leaders respond?

First, America no longer has the luxury of ignoring developments in international law or simply issuing a flat rejection to every and all international

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covenants and treaties. The United States already accedes to an international regimen in various economic matters through a network of treaties and multilateral agreements, some of which set forth standards of behavior on such issues as environmental policy and the rights of workers. Clearly, the U.S. will be a signatory to more such agreements in the future.

Second, the U.S. should judge proposed agreements that bear on matters of international relations strictly on their merits. The United States should be especially skeptical of covenants put forward in the name of international peace and global justice. Peace and stability continue to depend on American strength and the alliance of the world's democracies, not on a document that boasts the endorsement of Saddam Hussein and Fidel Castro. America should also beware of global accords whose advocates demand that the U.S. take the lead in humanitarian interventions while at the same time insisting that the "international community" determine how America conducts the military operation. The U.S. should also make clear that it will reject accords with imprecise, vague, and sweeping mandates, a good example being the effort to give the International Criminal Court jurisdiction over the "crime of aggression."

Finally, America should firmly and explicitly reject all efforts to place international law above our Constitution and domestic legislation. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the collapse of Communist rule in Central and Eastern Europe. Despite four decades of totalitarian rule, the countries of the region have, with a few exceptions, made a remarkable transformation to democracy and wide-ranging civil liberties. For Poland, Hungary, and other nations, the United States has stood as the model and ideal. These countries in particular admire the freedoms enshrined in the Bill of Rights—the freedoms of speech and assembly, press freedoms, the right to be free of state oppression. Their democratic leaders have been inspired by our Constitution and rule of law, not by U.N. accords or international agreements. Just as American strength has been the most effective force for peace and humanitarian ideals in the world, so the American political system has been the brightest beacon of individual liberty for those denied basic freedom, a more powerful force for liberty than any international covenant could ever hope to become.

America has no apologies to make for its political system, and there is no reason to bring it into conformance with an unelected and unaccountable regime of global standards that is at the root of international law. **NR**

■ **RACIAL POLITICS** ■

Asians of Influence

Is it racist to decry espionage?

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

SHERLOCK HOLMES would have had little difficulty in analyzing the real motives behind the recent expressions of concern from prominent Democrats such as U.N. ambassador Bill Richardson, the Chinese government, and Asian-American activists about the racist reactions of prominent Republicans, the Washington media elite, and the American people towards Chinese-Americans, and Asian-Americans generally, as a result of the China spy scandal.

"You say, Watson, that the dog barked on the night of the crime. Curiously, that same dog had also barked on the night of a previous crime. On both occasions, however, when inquiry was made, there was no sign that any assault had been attempted on the distinguished Chinese-Americans whom the dog was allegedly guarding. Plainly, the dog had been trained to bark whenever a crime was being committed elsewhere—in one case when illegal donations were accepted from a foreign power, in the second when military secrets were transferred to that self same power. On both occasions the canine noise served to distract the attention of passersby from these nefarious transactions. It all points to a criminal mind of almost diabolical craftiness. But unless I am very much mistaken, behind the sinister mask of Dr. Fu Manchu we shall find the smiling features of William Jefferson Clinton."

"The Arkansas Fundraising Chain-letter Perjuror?" I gasped.

"The very same," replied the great detective impassively. "It is perhaps his greatest coup in a life devoted to crime of every sort."

It is, in fact, quite hard to find actual expressions of anti-Chinese or anti-Asian racism in public statements by Republicans or anyone else. The nearest thing to an allegedly bigoted remark came from Alabama's Sen. Richard Shelby, who described the Chinese spies behind the stealing of U.S. technology as "crafty." This was seized upon as an, er, crafty employment of an ethnic stereotype about Asians. But since the spies undoubtedly were crafty—that comes with being a spy—the bigotry could well repose in the minds of those who heard the word "crafty" and instantly leapt to the conclusion that Shelby must have intended an ethnic slur.

Even before Sen. Shelby had committed his faux pas, however, Amb. Richardson had denounced those who were supposedly questioning "the patriotism of Asian-Pacific Americans and sowing the seeds of a darker xenophobia" because of the spy scandal. But his denunciation, bravely issued to a meeting of Chinese-Americans in New York, contained no hard evidence of anti-Chinese racism. And when the *Los Angeles Times* sought to fill this gap with anonymous anecdotes of "ethnic profiling" in America's nuclear-weapons laboratories, these turned out to be less than totalitarian. For example, "Snickering and hushed laughter broke out in a roomful of computer users as a person with a Chinese surname was introduced to lead a session on computer security."

Let us concede that such behavior can be wounding even if it is superficially jovial. We must go on to ask who or what is responsible for it and for the climate that prompts it. Most accounts blame Americans first. They leave no doubt that the racism of ordinary Americans—made worse by politicians who incite and aggravate it—is to blame. Richardson's

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speech, for instance, defended Asian-Americans against unnamed American racists. A spokesman for Beijing similarly blamed the spy scandal on "typical racial prejudice."

Then Maurice Meisner declared in the *Los Angeles Times* that "opportunistic American politicians now portray Chinese in stereotypical fashion. The increasingly dominant images are of 19th century vintage: Chinese are crafty, deceitful, villainous and half-crazed automatons manipulated by evil rulers. It has become ever more difficult for Americans to see Chinese as fellow humans," etc., etc. There is a neat symmetry here. Meisner's picture of Americans might almost be of "half-crazed automatons manipulated by evil rulers." But the reader will search in vain for any evidence supporting such a picture.

Bill Richardson and Bill Clinton by Roman Genn

Finally, William Wong, a columnist in the *San Francisco Examiner*, detected "the smell of political and possibly racial hysteria" in American reactions, observed that some Americans were "screaming" about China's stealing of U.S. secrets, and so on. He did not cite any actual American racist demanding that all Chinese-Americans should be penalized because one had fallen under suspicion of nuclear espionage. And I imagine that if another columnist were to write that some Americans remember the torture of American POWs in Korea by the Chinese army, Wong would be "screaming" racism by the end of the second paragraph.

Was there indeed any single case of an American or American organization penalizing all Asian-Americans because of the sins of some Asian-Americans? Yes—just one. The Democratic National Committee ceased to accept Asian-American contributions and returned some already received because of embarrassment over the Huang affair. But none of those indignantly denouncing American racism seem to remember that.

If there is precious little sign of racists spreading hate propaganda against Chinese-Americans, who then is responsible for the "snickering and hushed laughter" described above? Surely the villains, in ascending order of importance, are as follows: First, there are those individual Chinese-Americans who acted as the agents of a foreign power either to loot America's nuclear secrets or to distort America's elections. John Huang, for instance, funneled illegal contributions to the DNC from the Chinese government, and Peter Lee, a physicist at Los Alamos, betrayed American military secrets on a lecture trip to China when Beijing appealed to his ethnic loyalty.

Second, the Chinese government not only employed espionage against the U.S.; it planted its spies among Chinese immigrants and, while denouncing concern for American security as "racism," sought itself to play the race card by appealing to the ethnic sympathies of all Chinese, whatever their citizenship or place of birth, to place Beijing first in their loyalty.

Both the Chinese officials and their Chinese-American agents thereby cast doubt on the loyalties of millions of patriotic Chinese-Americans. Beijing revealed that it at least believed in the power of ethnicity over citizenship, and Lee and Huang demonstrated that Beijing had calculated right in some cases. That does not mean, of course, that the overwhelming majority of Chinese-Americans are not as loyal as Sergeant York; it does mean that individual Chinese-Americans applying for high-security positions may have to meet scrutiny on that score.

We rely on the U.S. government to make prudent judgments in this area. The Clinton administration is thus the third villain of the piece. By taking Beijing's money (almost certainly knowingly), by channeling it illegally through Asian-Americans, by concealing evidence of its own complicity as long as it could, by removing strategic controls on technology in return for campaign contributions from both China and American business, by turning a blind eye to evidence of serious espionage to the extent of refusing the FBI permission to wiretap a suspect, and finally by denouncing the investigation of such crimes as inspired by anti-Chinese racism, the administration has created the climate of "mild unease" cited by Bill Richardson in which no one can trust the government to protect the national interest and in which unassuaged suspicions become so much "snickering and hushed laughter." **NR**

■ **CAMPAIGN 2000** ■

Rego Goo Goo

Gore's illusory reinvention.

JOHN J. MILLER

VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE may never again say he invented the Internet, but as next year's presidential contest heats up he will claim again and again to have reinvented government. He will crow about how his National Partnership for Reinventing Government slashed the federal workforce to its lowest level since the Kennedy administration—and its smallest size as a percentage of the national labor force since the 1930s (351,000 federal positions shed since 1993). He will declare that federal communications are now written in "plain English." There is speculation that Gore will soon announce another rollback of 300,000 jobs.

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As Gore recently explained to federal employees, "The expression 'It's good enough for government' used to have a negative meaning. But now, thanks to the work of people like you, 'good enough for government' means top quality."

"Rego"—a word for "reinventing government" that, as the vice president notes, is "Gore spelled sideways"—was originally the Clinton administration's unpopular stepchild. Nobody wanted to take it on, least of all Gore—a dull issue for a dull guy. The vice president would have preferred spearheading welfare reform, but lost out. He then seized the reinventing-government platform with surprising vigor, and has made eye-popping claims about his success at shrinking the federal government ever since.

The problem is, he really doesn't have much to brag about. Most of the federal government's downsizing would have happened anyway. About three-quarters of the cuts Gore claims as his own have come from the Department of Defense and were made possible by the end of the Cold War. Another large chunk of the reductions—about 14,500 positions—came from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, which was charged with cleaning up the savings-and-loan mess. Its workforce increased in size for a time, but was naturally cut back after the job was finished.

What's more, the downsizing that has taken place has not led to savings. With the federal workforce dipping to roughly 1.6 million employees in 1999 from about 2 million six years earlier, it would seem that the government should be spending less on salaries. Instead, payroll costs at major agencies have risen. In 1993, those costs were $5.9 billion, according to the president's budget. This year, they are $7.4 billion. Some of this increase is the result of cost-of-living adjustments, but the personnel reductions also played a role—employees supposedly working harder after the reductions won special salary adjustments.

The reductions themselves have come with a steep price tag. There are essentially two ways to downsize: fire employees or pay them to quit early.

The reinventors chose the latter, which has cost about $3.3 billion in lump-sum payments averaging more than $20,000 per employee. The real costs are even greater.

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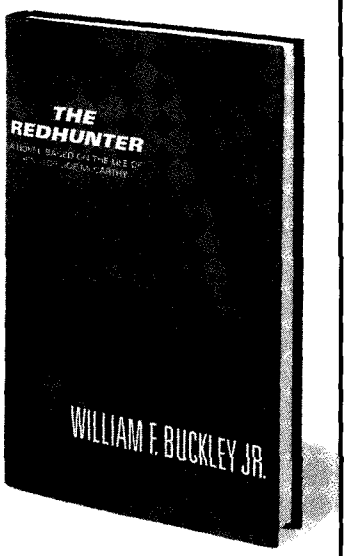

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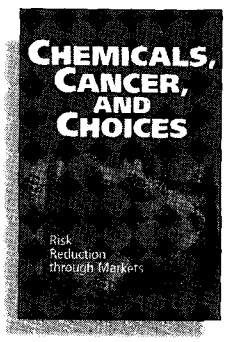

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Most of the workers accepting early retirement were actually closing in on their golden years. "If a buyout program simply results in payments going to those employees who would have left government anyway, the program would generate no salary savings to offset costs," wrote Congressional Budget Office director Dan L. Crippen in a May 25 memo. The heavy reliance on buyouts is also starting to distort the civil service; workers increasingly believe they are entitled to these expensive farewell packages at the end of their careers.

Focusing on federal employees at all may be a mistake. In his new book *The True Size of Government*, Paul C. Light of the Brookings Institution argues that for every person the government employs directly, there are many others who are employed indirectly through contracts, grants, and mandates. Although the Office of Personnel Management refuses to count these persons, Light has come up with his own estimate of how many Americans essentially owe their jobs to government: 17 million by the end of the first Clinton-Gore term, and rising.

For instance, the number of employees who work for the government under service contracts (excluding the Department of Defense) grew by 200,000 during the first three years of Rego, and there's no sign of a let-up. "We've created the illusion that the federal government is getting smaller," says Light.

But the fundamental problem with Rego, of course, is that it doesn't address the purpose of government. It makes no attempt to delete federal agencies, such as the Rural Electrification Administration, that are nothing more than relics of the New Deal. Nor has it examined basic regulatory inefficiencies. A report by the General Accounting Office earlier this year pointed out that frozen cheese pizzas are inspected by the Food and Drug Administration. If the pizzas have meat toppings, however, they fall under the auspices of the Department of Agriculture, an entirely separate bureaucracy.

Reinventing government, to its credit, has had a few successes, most notably in the area of procurement reform. And the overall trend toward privatizing federal functions is welcome. But any suggestion that the government now runs itself like a business is way off the mark. When the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee surveyed 24 inspectors general last year, 19 listed financial mismanagement as a serious problem at their agencies. Even the National Partnership for Reinventing Government itself lacks the basic knowledge one would expect of a private business.

How many people toil under the vice president in his effort to reinvent government? "That's a very difficult number to come up with," says Rego communications director John Robinson. "We have about 50 people in our office, and then there are many more working on these issues at individual agencies. It's definitely hundreds, maybe thousands."

Gore, however, is not going to stop trumpeting Rego as a major success. "Public employees are doing some of the most innovative things in the workforce," thanks to his labors, he recently declared. Yet public employees don't seem to agree. In a survey of federal workers released last December, only 35 percent said creativity and innovation are rewarded by management. Oh, well. Maybe that's good enough for government work. **NR**

■ **PUBLIC POLICY** ■

Road Warriors

Al Gore's way or the highway.

JONATHAN H. ADLER

APRIL THE FIFTEENTH was an even more taxing day than usual for commuters in the Washington, D.C., area. That afternoon U.S. district-court judge Stanley Sporkin halted the planned renovation and expansion of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. The bridge, which crosses the Potomac, is deteriorating rapidly. State and federal officials were planning to expand it from six lanes to twelve to ease congestion on the Washington Beltway.

But environmentalists, historic-preservation groups, and the city of Alexandria, Va., had other ideas, and Judge Sporkin upheld their claim that construction would violate several federal environmental laws. He ordered a further environmental review before work may continue. And that could take a while: In May, EPA official W. Michael McCabe was insisting on a full-fledged Environmental Impact Statement by the Federal Highway Administration, which could take up to two years—and that's just for starters. Local officials warn that substantial traffic disruptions will be inevitable if work does not begin soon.

The Wilson Bridge is just the latest casualty of a war on roads being waged around the country by environmental activists and "smart growth" advocates, aided and abetted by the Clinton administration and especially Al Gore. It is a war often financed by taxpayers: The EPA's "transportation partners" program, for instance, gives activist groups millions of dollars to agitate against road building and development.

According to Randal O'Toole of the Thoreau Institute, these "partners" opposed highway projects in 36 states in 1997. A major recipient of EPA largesse is the Surface Transportation Policy Project (dedicated to "the needs of people, rather than vehicles"), which runs a website for the EPA's partners program and serves as a clearinghouse for smart-growth propaganda. The project's steering committee reads like a *Who's Who* of environmental activists and liberal interest groups, including the Sierra Club, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and the United Church of Christ's Commission for Racial Justice.

The usual tactic of this anti-road coalition is to file lawsuits—under the Clean Air Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, or anything else within reach. A hospital access road in San Bernardino County, Calif., was held up for fear it might imperil an endangered fly. Even when these lawsuits are baseless, they can

Mr. Adler is the author of *Environmentalism at the Crossroads.*

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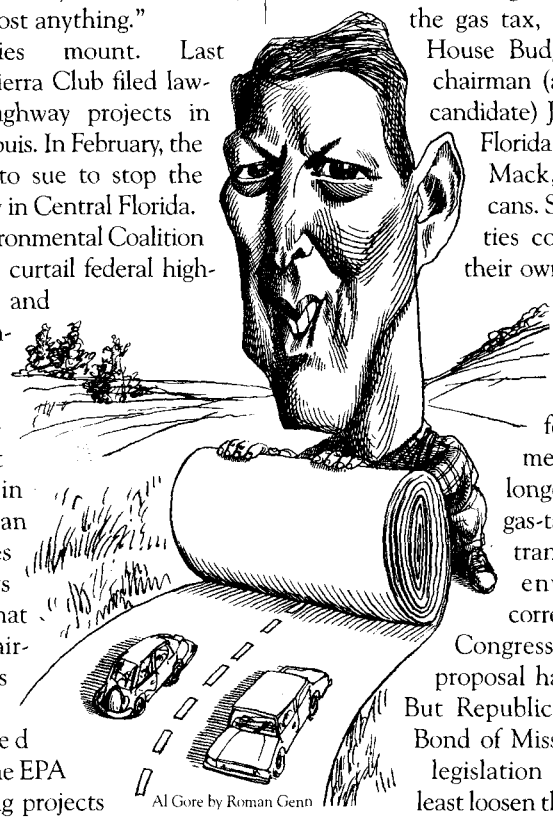
delay and add costs to construction. According to one highway consultant, "If you have the money and the smarts, you can stop almost anything."

The casualties mount. Last November, the Sierra Club filed lawsuits to stop highway projects in Atlanta and St. Louis. In February, the group promised to sue to stop the Suncoast Parkway in Central Florida. The Nevada Environmental Coalition plans a lawsuit to curtail federal highway spending and impose more stringent controls in that state as well.

The environmentalists' largest victory came in March. The Clean Air Act requires highway projects to be in an area that meets federal air-quality standards or to follow an EPA-approved clean-air plan. The EPA had been allowing projects to continue if they slipped out of compliance in the middle of construction—if, for instance, pollution temporarily increased in the area. But in a case brought by the Environmental Defense Fund (strangely enough, against the EPA), a federal appeals court held that these projects, too, had to be stopped.

The decision could have a tremendous impact nationwide. In Texas, for example, transportation officials estimate that in the next four years it could endanger as many as 87 projects, more if the EPA succeeds in raising air-quality standards. A conformity lapse in the Dallas-Fort Worth area would threaten an estimated 35 projects, including the President George Bush Turnpike and the I-635/U.S. 75 interchange. On May 3, the EPA sent a letter to Texas governor George W. Bush threatening to impose sanctions as early as December 2000 if federal air standards are not met.

One reason the EPA and environmental activists have so much leverage over local transportation projects is that most highways are financed, at least in part, by federal gas-tax revenues—revenues that come with conditions, covering everything from drinking ages to the design of automobile-emission tests. But federal meddling would be reduced if Washington were to slash both highway spending and the gas tax, as proposed by House Budget Committee chairman (and presidential candidate) John Kasich and Florida senator Connie Mack, both Republicans. States and localities could then build their own roads on their own dime. Indeed, they could build more, since the federal government would no longer be diverting gas-tax funds to mass transit and other environmentally correct ventures.


Al Gore by Roman Genn

Congress rejected that proposal handily last year. But Republican senator Kit Bond of Missouri is pushing legislation that would at least loosen the noose around road construction. The Sierra Club has responded with a barrage of radio advertisements against Bond and Missouri's other senator, Republican John Ashcroft. Bond's proposal, the ads say, threatens the nearly 50,000 children with asthma in the St. Louis area. "Please clean up the air," entreats a child at the spot's close.

But the Sierra Club's Missouri lawsuit poses safety risks of its own. The twisting stretch of Highway 21 near St. Louis that local officials are trying to replace is called "Blood Alley": Forty-three people died and over 2,000 were injured in accidents there in the 1980s and early '90s. "This doesn't have anything to do with clean air," said the mother of one victim at a press conference in February. "This is about a road. I don't want any other families putting crosses up at these accident sites."

The Clinton administration opposes any legislative response to the March court decision. Indeed, the EPA is negotiating with the Environmental Defense Fund to develop compromise rules that might allow a trickle of highway construction in affected areas. But no agreement has yet been released. State officials were never thrilled with the EPA's regulations, but now they don't even know what they're supposed to do before building a highway.

Vice President Gore has said that he is concerned about traffic congestion. That's why the administration is promoting mass transit. And Gore has even proposed a new federal program to finance traffic alerts so that traffic jams won't make working moms late for dinner. But the surest way to reduce congestion and commute times is to build more roads, which the public clearly desires and many communities are attempting to do.

The administration is simply not going to oblige. Even the Environmental Defense Fund has gotten $800,000 federal grants to promote smart growth as a "principal partner" of the very EPA it has a habit of suing. Gore's "livability agenda" will make the problem worse by adding more conditions to federal highway funding: He wants to pressure local governments to adopt smart-growth plans. Unless the administration changes its stance—and stops funding activist litigation—whoever runs against the vice president in 2000 may want to consider a new bumper sticker: "Stuck in traffic? Blame Al Gore." **NR**

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■ RELIGION ■

Too Much Good News

How not to talk about God.

WILLIAM McGURN

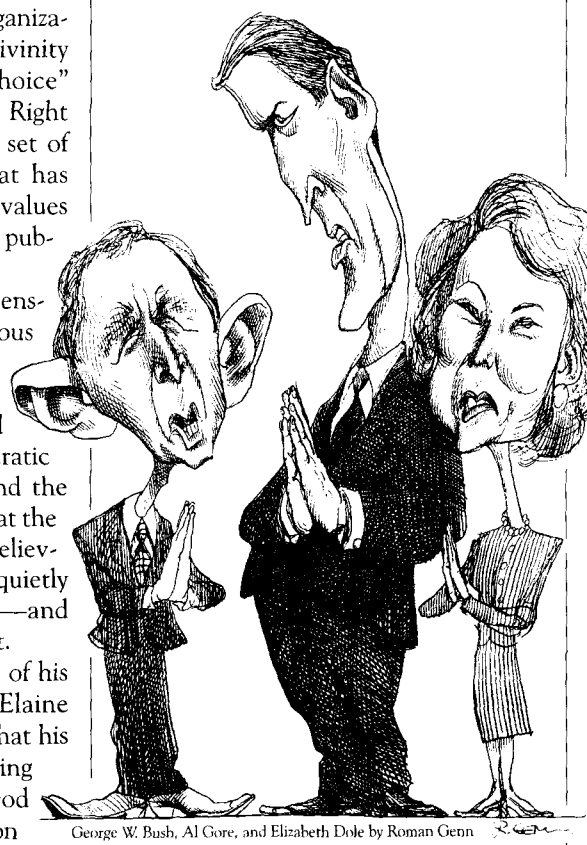
NEVER spake Al Gore like this before. During a recent campaign stop at a Salvation Army office in Atlanta, he called for "a new partnership" between government and "faith-based organizations." The former Vanderbilt divinity student attacked the "false choice" Americans face today: between a Right that wants to impose "a specific set of religious values" and a Left that has "said for too long that religious values should play no role in addressing public needs."

The press is having a field day, sensing correctly that if Gore is serious about what he said in Atlanta we are heading for major spats, not only between Republicans and Democrats but within the Democratic party. Indeed, Gore's remarks and the way they were reported suggest that the chasm is not so much between believing and not believing as between quietly believing and speaking about it—and between ways of speaking about it.

It did not help Gore when one of his senior advisors, Harvard's Elaine Kamarck, told the *Boston Globe* that his comments on faith were the opening shot in a campaign to "take God back" for the Democrats in Election 2000. Even some of Gore's other people were taken aback by Kamarck's comment. For it suggests a rank opportunism, the kind of suborning of religious beliefs for the sake of a political enterprise that the vice president's allies typically attribute to the evangelical Right.

Gore, of course, is not the only candidate to have stumbled on the G-word. Jimmy Carter was a born-again Baptist, and he was more ridiculed for admitting to having lusted in his heart than Bill Clinton ever was for having skipped the heart and gone straight to the cigar. Ditto for Ken Starr, whose occasional singing of hymns while jogging was treated as a sure sign of kookery. As the campaign for 2000 kicks off, presidential contenders from George W. Bush to Elizabeth Dole to Gary Bauer find themselves in much the same fix: how to confirm their bona fides to the faithful without coming across as a Christian ayatollah to the rest of America.

It is a dilemma of fairly recent vintage. For most of America's history, politicians invoked God and the Bible freely. But



George W. Bush, Al Gore, and Elizabeth Dole by Roman Genn

the Scopes "monkey trial" changed this forever. Though William Jennings Bryan was certainly not the buffoon of *Inherit the Wind*, the trial "publicly anathematized," as Richard John Neuhaus puts it, what had been "the original language of American Protestantism." The upshot is that a country that pledges allegiance to "one nation, under God," that stamps "In God We Trust" on its coins, and that attributes to our Creator the inalienable rights upon which it staked its claim to independence, lacks a public language of faith.

This result accounts for a curious disjunction in American politics that shows up every election cycle. While the denominational affiliations of Mrs. Dole, Gore, Bush, and Bauer are well within the American mainstream, their every utterance about faith is treated by the press as exotic, outside the pale. Dole and Bush are seen as pandering to the Christian Right, while Bauer is attacked for *being* the Christian Right. Candidates become uncomfortable discussing religion, knowing that the words that sound natural in church will be jarring in the public realm, as Gov. Bush found when he was called to task for saying (in 1994) that Jesus was the only path to heaven.

Some of this is sheer bigotry. Mostly, however, it is the outcome of decades of people having drummed into their heads that religion is entirely subjective and morality a matter solely of personal taste and preference—a belief that has been accompanied by the erasure from our schools and public facilities of any and all references deemed Christian.

If our dilemma is new, its roots are not. What makes the problem especially acute is that some of those roots found naturally fertile soil in Protestantism. The great American experiment in ordered liberty would not have been possible without the disestablishment of religion, which itself would not have been possible without the Protestant Reformation. But as early as a century ago, Orestes Brownson, the Transcendentalist-*cum*-Catholic writer, worried that this experiment would eventually be devoured by Protestantism's lack of ultimate ecclesiastical authority.

In a curious way, even the evangelicals who insist that there indeed exists an objective law, and that it can be discovered, inadvertently contribute to the problem. They do so with a language that suggests morality has its only basis in Scripture. This of course begs the question whether non-Christians, or even Christians who read Scripture differently, can be moral; indeed,

Mr. McGurn is a member of the *Wall Street Journal*'s editorial board.

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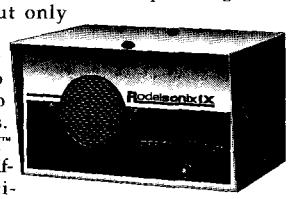

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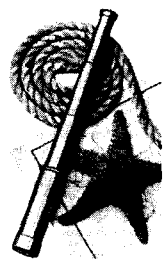

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whether they can assent to the same America.

It would be easy to say that this is simply a matter of rhetoric. Certainly many Christian activists understand that much religious rhetoric can sound unnervingly self-righteous in the political arena. In his 1996 book *Active Faith*, former Christian Coalition chief Ralph Reed said as much when he suggested that "calling gays 'perverts' or announcing that AIDS is God's judgment on the gay community is not consistent with the Christian call to mercy." What Reed probably also meant was that it was not consistent with the American electorate, which suspects that professions of a commitment to genuine pluralism on the part of groups like the Christian Coalition are only a tactic to get into power and fly their true colors.

Reagan was a Christian who believed religion essential to the preservation of liberty.

Unfortunately, there is some evidence that this is just how many conservative Christians do think. The trouble isn't just the prominence of activists such as Randall Terry and writers such as George Grant, Christian Reconstructionists who advocate the imposition of Biblical law, including the stoning of adulterers. It's also a more widespread attitude, among evangelicals in particular, that at least strikes other citizens as disrespectful of them.

Notwithstanding protestations to the contrary, most of us who have not been "born again" have some experience of meeting someone who has and learning that we are not saved. In the case of Catholics, we learn to our surprise that we are not even Christians. The same language and enthusiasm that may get some people to church—and even into the polling booths—often alienate everyone else.

So how should candidates, particularly Christians, speak about God and faith? The typical answer is that they should profess a sort of Christianity Lite, which leaves Christians free to hold their strong beliefs so long as these beliefs have no consequences for public life. The real answer, though, is not to diminish belief but to make a distinction between Christian theology and Christian philosophy. From the start, Americans have been fiercely divided over the former, the constitutional answer to which division was the disestablishment of religion by the federal government. But the same Constitution that distinguished church and state drew its inspiration from centuries of Christian understanding about man and his relationship to God and society; the same Declaration of Independence that announced our freedom grounded it in "the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God."

Acceptance of this distinction does not entail any compromise on moral absolutes. To the contrary, it amounts to a recognition that these absolutes are as much a matter of nature as of sectarian belief, that they can be grasped by reason without recourse to revelation. This may be why the political figures most adept at speaking about faith and morals today are so often Catholics: Think of Bill Bennett on homosexuality, Chris Matthews on Clinton's shortcomings, Henry Hyde on abortion. It's certainly not because Catholics are any smarter or more virtuous than their fellow Americans. It's because their natural-law understanding of morality (and their experience as an American minority) makes it easy for them to acknowledge objective moral standards without seeming to imply the moral superiority of their coreligionists.

This ability, of course, isn't the exclusive property of Catholics. Ronald Reagan, for instance, is a Protestant, and his core beliefs are historically associated with Protestantism: the virtues of hard work, the moral danger posed by big government, the justness of enterprise, and the certitude that God made men to be free and made America to prove it. But his demeanor and tone were those more typically found among Catholic politicians. Reagan was a Christian who believed religion essential to the preservation of liberty. He just didn't think we needed to hear about his relationship with Jesus to prove it. **NR**

EDUCATION

Obsessive Compulsion

The folly of mandatory high-school attendance.

JACKSON TOBY

In all the commentary on the murders at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo., an obvious question has gone unraised: Why, if Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold were miserable at school, didn't they simply drop out? Why did they feel trapped? The answer is apparently that the stigma of dropping out of high school is so great in middle-class suburbs that it is unthinkable.

In all states, compulsory-attendance laws forbid students to drop out until they turn 16 and sometimes until they turn 18 or even older. States have also imposed penalties on dropouts and their families, including reduced welfare benefits. West Virginia began in 1988 to revoke the driver's licenses of minors who drop out of school, and other states have since adopted this approach, even though it has had a negligible effect on the dropout rate in West Virginia.

Why is dropping out regarded as a terrible mistake? First, it is assumed to be a personal mistake because, in a complex, information-oriented society, a high-school education is needed to avoid unemployment. The evidence about the comparative earnings of people with various levels of education seems to support this assumption. Second, it is assumed to be a social mistake.

Chester E. Finn Jr., the education

Mr. Toby is professor of sociology at Rutgers University and was director of the Institute for Criminological Research there from 1969 to 1994.

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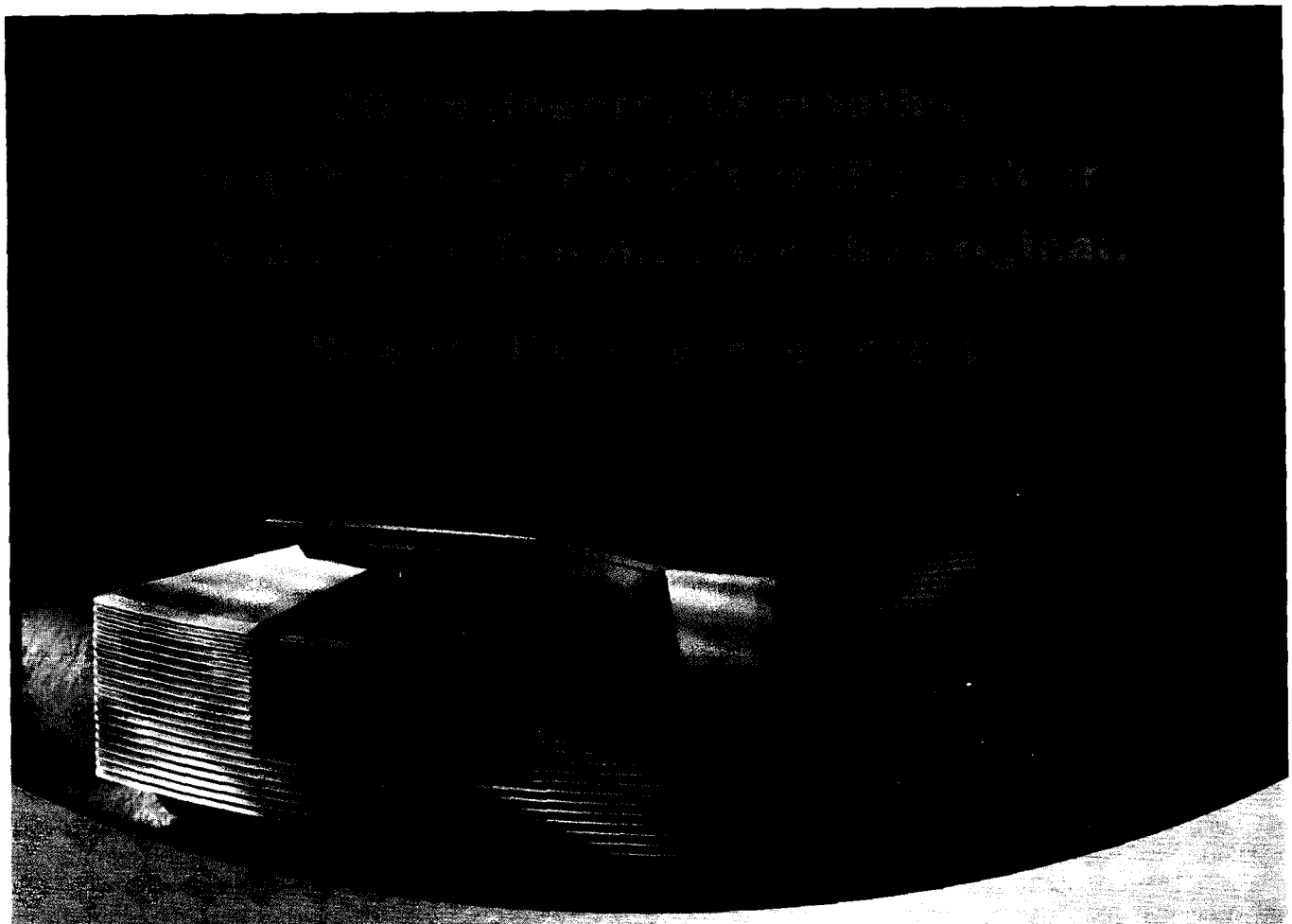

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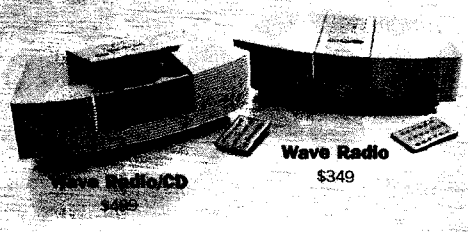

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ana' 'st and former Reagan-administration official, describes education as "something that a decently functioning society obliges people to get a certain amount of, even if they don't really want to."

But the case for coerced high-school education—so rarely questioned—really relies on ignoring certain facts and swallowing certain myths. First, the facts:

Fact 1: Some students do not learn what school is supposed to teach them: reading and writing, history and geography, arithmetic and science. The reason may be lack of parental encouragement and help, which research has shown to be crucial in motivating children to learn; it may be that students have physical or psychological handicaps; it may be peer influences. Whatever the reasons, kids who don't understand what is going on in class are bored and disruptive when they attend at all. They become internal dropouts, still enrolled but making no effort to learn.

Fact 2: The presence of these internal dropouts discourages teachers. They often wear high-school teachers down to the point that the teachers stop putting forth the effort required to put ideas into the heads of students. One consequence of burnout is enormous teacher-turnover rates, especially in inner-city high schools with large proportions of internal dropouts. But some teachers hold on grimly, taking as many days off as they are entitled to, including "sick" days (known in the trade as "mental-health" days). Of course, burned-out teachers lose effectiveness at teaching students who are in fact amenable to education; that probably is part of the explanation for the greater satisfaction of students and their parents with secular private schools, parochial schools, and charter schools.

Fact 3: Internal dropouts contribute disproportionately to fights and assaults, and probably to thefts, in public high schools. While occasional violence occurs in most schools, some schools in large systems such as those in New York and Washington, D.C., suffer chronic violence as the internal dropouts multiply while the more serious students flee to private or parochial schools or a school system in the suburbs.

Fact 4: In some other industrial countries where high-school enrollment is voluntary, not compulsory, a significant proportion of young people enroll and graduate. Japan is particularly noteworthy because its high schools are not only voluntary but a major expense. Yet a higher percentage of Japanese young people than American ones graduate from high school. The Japanese go to high school, and do much more homework than Americans, because they are convinced by their parents and the cultural values of their society that their futures depend on a good education.

The United States is surely not Japan, so we may not be able to convince as many of our young people to attend and graduate from school as the Japanese do. But persuasion is possible. We do not compel college attendance, yet the college-attendance rate in America is still the highest in the world. Making high school voluntary and the courses tougher would affect perhaps 5 to 10 percent of students currently enrolled in public high schools. The majority will do whatever they must to graduate. So why do most people shrink from the conclusion that compulsory high-school attendance is unnecessary? On to the myths:

McDonald's has more success in training teens than do most government programs.

Myth 1: Adolescents can be educated whether they like it or not. Actually, education in any meaningful sense depends on a cooperative relationship between teacher and student. Unmotivated students do not learn enough to justify the effort to keep them enrolled. Laurence Steinberg of Temple University, Bradford Brown of the University of Wisconsin, and Sandford Dornbusch of Stanford University conducted a study of 20,000 students in nine public high schools in Wisconsin and northern California from 1987 to 1990. They concluded that about 40 percent of the students in these diverse educational settings (suburban, rural, and inner-city) were "disengaged" from the educational enterprise. Here is how Steinberg put it in his book *Beyond the Classroom*:

> Disengaged students . . . do only as much as it takes to avoid getting into trouble. They do not exert much effort in the classroom, are easily distracted during class, and expend little energy on in-school or out-of-school assignments. They have a jaded, often cavalier attitude toward education and its importance to their future success or personal development.

Myth 2: The students who will leave school as soon as they can will generate a crime wave. Two studies exploded that myth a generation ago: a national study of adolescents conducted by researchers at the University of Michigan (*Dropping Out: Problem or Symptom?*) and a study of California youths conducted by criminologists Delbert S. Elliot and Harwin L. Ross (*Delinquency and Dropout*). Both studies followed students throughout their high-school years and beyond, gathering delinquency data covering the entire period. They independently reached the same conclusion: While it is true that high-school dropouts had a higher crime rate than other students, the higher delinquency rate preceded their dropping out of school and did not increase after they left.

Myth 3: Those who do not complete high school are doomed to live an economically and culturally impoverished life. What kind of job can a dropout get? How about flipping burgers for the minimum wage? Fast-food restaurants have a reputation for offering dead-end jobs, yet they are actually a major trainer of the poorly educated for jobs that lead into the middle class. McDonald's is more successful at training egocentric teenagers, including dropouts, to become good enough workers to move on to better jobs than most government training programs.

The surprising statistical finding of *Dropping Out*, which looked into the employment experiences of dropouts, is that on average they did at least as well as high-school graduates who did

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not go on to college. Formal education is not the only path to responsible adulthood. It should also be remembered that deciding not to complete high school is a revocable choice. The former governor of New Jersey, Jim Florio, dropped out of school at 17, joined the Navy, realized that his lack of a diploma was a handicap, took the GED exam, and eventually completed college and law school. Instead of locking the high-school doors to prevent students from leaving, we ought to let those who do leave know that the doors remain open should they wish to return.

The coercion of compulsory education hasn't worked well for a simple reason: Some people do not learn to tolerate school, much less to like it. And some of them engage in desperate coping measures. There was little point in keeping Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold at Columbine High. **NR**

■ **THE MILITARY** ■

Memorial Daze

The Air Force and the Marines at war.

KATE O'BEIRNE

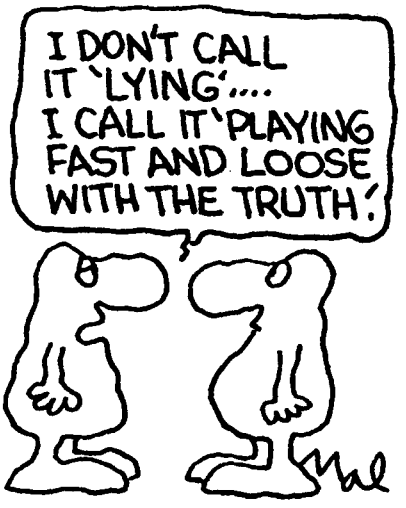
LAST fall, with a threatened government shutdown hours away, congressional leaders and senior White House officials huddled to negotiate the crucial final details of more than $400 billion in spending. But negotiators put aside disagreements over major issues like abortion and labor regulations to handle a dispute just as hot: the duel between the Air Force and the Marine Corps over the site of a memorial.

In 1993, Congress approved a request from the Air Force to build a monument, with private funds, on an unspecified site. The Air Force Memorial Foundation began a fundraising drive led by Joe Coors Jr. and boosted by defense contractors. After reviewing proposed locations around Washington, the foundation settled on a lovely spot, a quiet 25-acre hillside near Arlington Cemetery in Virginia that enjoys a commanding view of the capital's monuments across the Potomac River. Since 1954, this same hillside, known as Arlington Ridge, has also been home to the Iwo Jima Memorial.

The Iwo Jima Memorial commemorates the 26,000 Marine casualties suffered in the battle for that remote Pacific island in 1945. The sculpture is based on a famous photograph of a band of Marines raising the American flag on top of Mount Suribachi in the midst of fierce fighting. Over the past 45 years, the memorial has come to represent the sacrifice of all fallen Marines, and the Corps's veterans are determined to protect their hill from the threatened Air Force invasion.

Understandably so. There is more at stake in the fight than interservice bragging rights. There is indeed a touch of *Kulturkampf* behind the plans for a slick new modern memorial near the Iwo Jima sculpture, which Washington art poobah J. Carter Brown once dismissed as "kitsch." And there certainly is a huge helping of interservice envy, as the Air Force, formed in 1947, seeks by association some of the glory of the tradition-soaked, 224-year-old Marines.

The services have drafted veterans in Congress, bureaucrats, lawyers, and defense firms in a struggle that threatens to sour the branches' relationship for years to come. In official backing, the Air Force so far has the advantage. The



National Park Service, the National Capital Planning Commission, and the Commission of Fine Arts have all endorsed the proposed two-acre site and the memorial's design—which calls for a 50-foot-tall aluminum, origami-like structure that would include an underground visitors center.

Supporters of the Air Force memorial argue that the Marine Corps tacitly approved the proposed location in 1994 when Corps commandant Carl E. Mundy Jr. refrained from objecting. For his part, Mundy says he wasn't informed just how intrusive the Air Force memorial would be. In any case, the Marines have now formally objected to the plans. More than two dozen former Marine generals, including five former commandants, have appealed to the secretary of the interior to preserve the current status of the "serene and contemplative park" on Arlington Ridge.

Complaints about the proposed memorial from Marines in the field have reached the Pentagon. And retired Marine Corps lieutenant general Charles Cooper, chairman of the Iwo Jima Preservation Committee, recently told his supporters: "At this time, we need to avoid looking back, avoid any self-recrimination about whether or not our listening posts were on full alert. The fact is the enemy has penetrated our wire and our mission is to restore the integrity of our position."

How deep run the feelings? Former Navy secretary James Webb, the son of an Air Force veteran, sees a lack of gratitude for the Marine Corps he himself served. "The very mission in the battle of Iwo Jima," he wrote, "carried out at a cost of 1,000 dead Marines for every square mile of territory taken, was to eliminate enemy fighter attacks on Air Force bombers passing overhead and to provide emergency runways for Air Force pilots who had flown in harm's way." Retired Marine colonel Dave Severance, who commanded the troops who raised the flag on Iwo Jima, calls the proposed monument a historic insult: "I am convinced we Marines have done enough for the Army Air Corps/U.S. Air Force without having to share our Marine Corps War Memorial park with them."

In response, the Air Force invokes the 52,173 combat deaths suffered by the

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Army Air Forces in World War II who "deserve a similar respect," as one retired Air Force general put it. Another retired general, Chuck Link, president of the Air Force Memorial Foundation, argues that the Marines are reacting to an "imagined slight" because "there is no way our memorial interferes with their statue." The Air Force memorial would be 500 feet away from the Marines' monument and shielded from it by a stand of evergreens.

But Marine supporters don't care how separate the new monument is. The Friends of Iwo Jima and Marine veterans have recently retained a top-notch law firm to battle the National Park Service over the environmental impact of the proposed memorial. "Marines never quit. We will fight it out to the end, bitter or otherwise," declares former congressman Gerry Solomon, also a former Marine.

Last year during the budget negotiations, it was Solomon who negotiated an agreement to consider moving the proposed Air Force site, only to have Senate Appropriations Committee chairman and former fighter pilot Ted Stevens nix the arrangement. If construction of the Air Force memorial is stalled until the end of next year, congressional approval of any monument would have to be reaffirmed, and the battlefield would again become Capitol Hill. Solomon's fellow former Marines, including senators Pat Roberts, Conrad Burns, and Craig Thomas, will continue his fight, while Stevens, with the support of minority leader Tom Daschle, an Air Force veteran, will continue to front for the Air Force.

The Marines are willing to help the Air Force win quick approval for an alternative location near Arlington Cemetery, which would indeed be suitable. Through 45 years of quiet prayers, sunset parades and wreath-laying ceremonies, the Marines have an emotional and traditional claim on Arlington Ridge that ought to be honored. A new Air Force memorial right next door would be a monument, among other things, to disrespect. Surely the Air Force can commemorate its fallen just as well elsewhere and, rather than bring the Marines to their knees, content itself for now with the defeat of a far more fitting adversary—Slobodan Milosevic. **NR**

■ ABROAD ■

Liberté, Egalité, Stupidité

The French Right is still cracked up—*hélas!*

KENNETH R. WEINSTEIN

THE French Right should be riding high about now. The ruling Socialist party is tarnished by scandal, the Left generally is splintered, and the French economy is in a slowdown. Yet, as European parliamentary elections approach, the Right is in no shape to take advantage of these conditions. As usual, it, even more than the Left, is hopelessly divided.

In mid April, Philippe Séguin abruptly stepped down as head of France's largest conservative party, the Rally for the Republic (RPR), after a bitter behind-the-scenes feud with President Jacques Chirac. This was but the latest symptom of a much deeper problem afflicting French conservatives.

Chirac, who founded the neo-Gaullist RPR, must shoulder a large part of the blame for the Right's disarray. The unprecedented majority that right-of-center parties won in 1993, he whittled away by a series of tactical blunders. First, he alienated half of the Right by refusing to offer any cabinet posts to his conservative rivals. Second, he placed Alain Juppé, a cold technocrat, in the prime minister's seat. Under Chirac's guidance, Juppé abandoned the supply-side economics that had contributed to Chirac's victory and adopted austerity policies to assure that France met the criteria for European monetary union—despite the fact that the country faced record unemployment and an economy shrinking for the first time since World War II. Finally, sensing an economic uptick, Chirac sought to catch the Left off guard by calling for an early dissolution of the National Assembly in 1997. Voters promptly slapped him in the face, returning the Left to a majority and forcing him into a period of *cohabitation* (power sharing) with a Socialist prime minister, Lionel Jospin.

Despite these problems, the European parliamentary elections of June 13, 1999, were not supposed to go badly for the non-Europhobic Right. Against a divided Left, the Right sought to present a united front called the Alliance, soon defunct, consisting of candidates from the RPR and the center-right Union of French Democracy (UDF). But if the Right thought it might paper over its considerable internal differences on European integration, it had to deal with another great fissure: the question of the approximately 15 percent of voters who back Jean-Marie Le Pen and his racist, xenophobic National Front. To its credit, the republican Right had, on countless occasions, resisted the temptation to join with the far Right, even at the price of electoral victory.

But some conservatives succumbed to this temptation in the regional elections of March 1998 when five UDF council presidents, including former defense minister Charles Millon, were elected with the support of the Front. Controversy engulfed the UDF. Facing pressure, Millon and others willing to cooperate with the Front bolted from the UDF to form the Liberal Democratic party. Its leader is former finance minister and Milton Friedman acolyte Alain Madelin. Deprived of its right wing, the UDF was transformed from a broad center-right coalition to a centrist, Eurofederalist party; suddenly, it was unable to reach agreement with the RPR on how to unite for the European elections.

The European Union has proven a particularly thorny issue for French conservatives. Unlike in Great Britain, there is virtually no free-market opposition to the EU. Instead, the Right finds itself split into four main camps:

Mr. Weinstein is associate editor of *Azure: Ideas for the Jewish Nation.*

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Europhobics, Eurominimalists, Europhiles, and Eurofederalists. The Europhobics argue that any form of European union poses a grave danger to French sovereignty; they fashioned three election slates—two extreme-Right "lists" and a nationalist bloc headed by RPR renegades. The RPR proper—led until April by Séguin—changed its position from outright opposition to the EU to support for a barebones Union; that is another slate. The Europhiles, headed by Madelin, favor economic integration but believe that the EU should remain a confederation of sovereign nation-states, each with veto power over major decisions. Finally, the UDF slate maintains that Europe should be turned into a wholehearted federal system, with common economic, foreign, and defense policies.

Given the Right's divergent views on Europe, Chirac sent signals that a vote for any of the four center-right slates—not the Europhobic, National Front-tinged ones—was acceptable to him. This broad-church approach infuriated Séguin as the representative of the president's own party. That is when he angrily resigned.

Even without Le Pen, the EU, and Chirac's many faux pas, uniting the French Right would be a near-impossible task. In his classic 1966 study, *The Right Wing in France*, political scientist Réné Rémond argued that the French Right is divided into three movements. Here is another list: The first is a reactionary camp of counter-revolutionary traditionalists; the second, a Bonapartist national-populist camp; the third, an Orléanist camp that embodies classical-liberal principles. These divisions linger today. The far Right sees itself as the true defender of French tradition against the global economy. The Bonapartist strain is represented by Gaullist nationalists in the RPR who claim to defend national sovereignty against European integration while promoting social-spending programs aimed ostensibly at protecting the average Frenchman. The Orléanist Right is represented by the increasingly pro-market, pro-rule-of-law policies of a center-Right comprised of elements of the RPR, the UDF, and the Liberal Democrats. These three enduring historic divisions have been compounded by a parliamentary system that discourages the development of an American-style two-party system, which would in turn lead to a single party of the Right.

While the Right is certainly divided, Jean-Claude Casanova (yes, Casanova), former chief of staff to ex-prime minister Raymond Barre, maintains that it is "not in crisis." To begin with, as in much of Europe and the United States, the political center of gravity has shifted dramatically to the right, with the French Left adopting much of the Right's political agenda. Prime Minister Jospin's coalition of Socialists, Greens, and Communists has opened the door to private pensions and has sold off more state-sector holdings than in all previous privatization efforts combined, including France Telecom, the former state telephone monopoly, and Air France.

In addition, the extreme Right finds itself in turmoil. The National Front has succumbed to the splinter politics typical of such parties. Le Pen's former number two, Bruno Mégret, formed a new party that seeks a place at the table with the respectable Right—and Le Pen's numbers in the polls have dropped significantly. "If the far Right collapses," according to Casanova—and it probably will—"the [republican] Right will be in an extremely powerful electoral position."

Furthermore, Séguin's resignation may mark the final breath of Gaullism,

which has become almost a non-factor in electoral politics. The RPR is no longer a Gaullist party, but simply a party of supporters of Jacques Chirac. The day after Séguin's resignation, *France Soir* proclaimed, "De Gaulle is finished." Gaullism promoted a right-wing foreign policy (the defense of national sovereignty and greatness) while seeking to preempt the Left on social and economic policy. This defense of government on the right muddied the political waters; when many on the right called for tax cuts to stimulate economic growth in 1995, Séguin called for increased government spending to combat unemployment.

Despite the general shift rightward in France, the nation remains inhospitable to American-style conservatism, according to Michel Gurfinkiel, editor of the newsweekly *Valeurs actuelles*. For nearly four centuries, France has been a statist, hierarchical society. Even the French Revolution, as Tocqueville argued, accentuated the centralization of power. The tentacles of the state, which directly controls over half of France's gross national product, have corrupted nearly all classes in French society, each of which depends, to one degree or another, on the state's largesse. In the past half century, the state's power has become increasingly centralized within one body—the *énarques*, graduates of the elite *Ecole nationale d'administration*, the French Harvard Business School for civil servants. These technocrats have made their peace with the welfare state in exchange for control over the management of French society. Even the people running the newly privatized industries, themselves *énarques*, look to the state for contracts and benefits.

The result, Gurfinkiel laments, is that "at the level of ideas, we are light years away from Anglo-Saxon conservatism. We have no deep traditions of community, of individual rights, of private enterprise or individual initiative." To bring these cornerstones of conservatism to France remains a daunting task. And a political grouping that can't even agree on a single slate for the European parliamentary elections seems—to put it mildly—unable to meet that challenge. **NR**

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■ COVER STORY ■

The Mystery of Hillary Clinton

The First Lady no one knows.

MARK STEYN

I CONFESS I've always had a soft spot for Hillary Rodham Clinton. But then, asked to name my favorite Marx Brother, I usually cite Margaret Dumont. *In A Night at the Opera* and *A Night in Casablanca*, she was the haughty, imperious grande dame standing on her dignity while Groucho prowled around, waggling his cigar at every other woman in sight. The rock, the anchor of every great double-act is always the straight man, and the best straight man—or woman—is one who never really gets the joke in the first place.

And so it goes in that long-running gag-fest *Two Terms at the White House*: Like Groucho, the leering Clinto waggles his (unlit) cigar and staggers from one catastrophe to another, but through it all Hillary Rodham Dumont remains ever more serene and queenly. It's a magnificent performance, and harder than it looks: While most of the country seems content to have a president who's a laughingstock, the First Lady has to glide by, pretending that the thongs and DNA aren't there. To the public, Bill's the funny one, with his amusing pants-drops and distinguishing characteristics. But, to old showbiz pros, to connoisseurs, that kind of shtick's a little obvious: The genius in the act is Hillary. Not many of us would relish having to stand in front of an audience and crank out the same old lines night after night at rally after rally, in the stilted cadences of that computerized voice in your car that tells you to fasten your seat belt: "I. Am. So. Proud. Of. My. Husband. And. Our. President. Bill. Clinton."

One can sympathize with Mrs. Clinton's frustrations, but even so she seems determined on a huge gamble: The stooge has decided to step out as a solo act, a star in her own right. The precedents are hardly encouraging. True, Dean Martin made it after Jerry Lewis, but the First Lady doesn't sing—at least not to the authorities. Yet, amazingly, she's all but decided to run for New York's Senate seat. Local Democratic-party bigshots are deliriously egging her on with cries of "Six more years!"

Madeleine Albright, Hillary Clinton, and Janet Reno by Roman Genn

HER TIME TO SHINE?

Now you might disagree with my take, but that's okay. With the First Lady, you can fumble around but you can never really get a firm grip on her: She remains all things to all men, unlike her husband, to whom all women are all things. To me, she's Margaret Dumont. To the American people, she's the beloved First Doormat. To those feminists who drove around with "I'm Voting for Hillary's Husband" stickers, she's always been the star: It's just taken the rest of us a while to figure it out. But now we're ready, and so's she. It's Tina after Ike! Cher after Sonny! The diva without the dork! Or, at any rate, Ethel Merman at the end of *Gypsy*, the stage mother who's sacrificed her own life to promote a child prodigy who'll never grow up: "What did it get me? Scrapbooks full of me in the background." Not anymore. The First Lady is stepping into the spotlight to claim her due: "This time—for me!"

Mr. Steyn is a columnist for Britain's *Daily Telegraph* and Canada's *National Post*.

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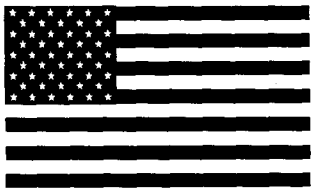

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Illegal drug use in the U.S. and the Netherlands (1997)

	EVER USED		USED PAST YEAR		USED PAST MONTH	
	USA	DUTCH	USA	DUTCH	USA	DUTCH
MARIJUANA	32.9	15.6	9.0	4.5	5.1	2.5
COCAINE	10.5	2.1	1.9	0.6	0.7	0.2
INHALANTS	5.7	0.5	1.1	0.1	0.4	too small to measure
HEROIN	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.1	too small to measure	too small to measure

Source U.S.: National Household Survey 1997 SAMHSA, Office of applied studies Washington, DC.
Source the Netherlands: M. Abraham, P. Cohen, M. DeWinter: Licit and Illicit drug use in the Netherlands, Center for Drug Research, University of Amsterdam.

"The Netherlands follows a strong public health approach to drug use. The Dutch do not normally arrest people for possession or distribution of small amounts of drugs, and even allow the sale of small amounts of marijuana from specialized shops. In addition to our research showing lower levels of drug use, the Netherlands' rate of incarceration is about 11% of the United States' as a result of these policies."

- Peter Cohen, Ph.D., Center for Drug Research, University of Amsterdam -

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And who can blame her? To the investigators in Ken Starr's office, she's always been the brains of the Clinton operation. In *It Takes a Village*, the account of her first steps in breast-feeding is prefaced by an aphorism: "We learn the rope of life by untying its knots." Mrs. Clinton's trick was in preventing the rope of her life from unraveling completely: Though one might detect a pattern of behavior from that long-ago Arkansas land deal to the firing of the travel-office staff, she was too clever to leave any fingerprints. Unfortunately, the chief executive of Clinton Scandals, Inc., left her husband in charge of one small branch office: sex. And, sadly, Mr. Clinton's small branch has done for the entire operation. Unlike his canny wife, the president left a trail of fingerprints

To Tony Blair, in one of his creepier bits of sucking up, Hillary Rodham Clinton is another Princess Di.

and more on everything and everyone he touched. In the biographical dictionaries, instead of a few vague references somewhere in the 15th paragraph to "controversies surrounding their financial affairs," the entry for William Jefferson Clinton will now begin: "Second president to be impeached." His hapless consort's only chance of rewriting history is to gamble on double or quits: "William Jefferson Clinton, 42nd president, now best remembered as husband of 44th president, Hillary Rodham (q.v.)."

But, if you don't buy the First Doormat or First Feminist, how about this? To Tony Blair, in one of his creepier bits of sucking-up (even by his standards), she's another Princess Di. The two women shared, apparently, the same "qualities of dignity and grace." At the White House banquet at which he made the observation, the thought hung awkwardly in the air, it being perfectly obvious that the two couldn't be more different, save for the fact that they're both strong women married to wimpy, weak-willed adulterers. But try to picture Princess Hill demurely fluttering her kohl-ringed eyes and murmuring, "Well, um, you see it was all a bit difficult because there were really three of us in this marriage"—actually, for the Clintons, make that 33.

No, if Mrs. Clinton's a princess of any kind, she's a pre-Diana royal duchess. In Britain, Bagehot advised the Royal Family not to let "daylight in on the magic," something that's proved all but impossible in an age of forensic media scrutiny. But Mrs. Clinton has managed it: She's spent her entire adult life in public, and yet the mystery has been illuminated by not a shaft of daylight. Indeed, media deference in the United States is curiously reminiscent of that in Britain up to 20 years ago, when lame, awkward attempts at humor by, say, Princess Alexandra or the Duchess of Gloucester were fawningly hailed as evidence of natural wit and the ability to connect with ordinary people. Bill Clinton has discussed his boxers and briefs on TV; taken his penis along to a naval surgeon to be examined for the Paula Jones suit; and had his semen processed by the FBI crime lab. Now imagine asking Hillary what kind of bra she wears. We know everything about Bill Clinton except an inkling of what his wife is like. After a year of unparalleled public scrutiny, the truth of their marriage is more unknown and unknowable than ever. Is it, as longtime friend Sen. Dale Bumpers suggested, that Hillary was blissfully unaware of Bill's lapses? The First Family, roared the old Ozark hogswill peddler in a teary speech during the president's trial, "has already been about as decimated as a family can get . . . There's been nothing but mental agony, sleepless nights . . ." Maybe he's right, but who knows? Maybe back home Bill and Hill were watching ol' Dale and weeping with laughter.

TRUE CLINTONISM

"We all have a little Clinton in us," wrote Margaret Carlson in *Time*. The question America has to ask itself right now is whether any of us really need a little more. The Clintonistas (and there are still quite a few of them out there) are beginning to come on like those old-time Soviet Communists who used to insist that, despite all its evident failures, there was nothing wrong with Communism: We just hadn't had the right *type* of Communism. Likewise, we're told after eight years, there's nothing wrong with Clintonism: We just haven't had the right Clinton. It is, in its way, an audacious plan: an artful way to dodge the Twenty-Second Amendment and ensure that the Clinton era stretches lazily into the new millennium, to the 2008 presidential election and beyond. If it works, it will at least legitimize retrospectively Hillary's tenure as First Lady. This is the only country in the Western world in which the consort of the head of government is given a semiformal role, an office, and a staff. Mrs. Clinton's presence in the White House derives from the fact of her marriage to the president. If that marriage is a sleazy travesty of what most Americans, even today, understand by the term, then Hillary Rodham Clinton is not merely the most pathetic First Lady in history but also the most illegitimate First Lady.

For a year, Mrs. Clinton provided the respectable cover for the people's torpor: "If Hillary doesn't care," they told pollsters, "why should we?" Some went farther. The Republicans, wrote Susan Ager in the *Detroit Free Press*, "are punishing Bill Clinton for thrusting upon America a First Lady who is smart, gutsy, accomplished and opinionated."

Mr. Clinton has certainly been thrusting upon America, but the First Lady is one of his less successful efforts. "Smart"? How many other smart women would let themselves be maneuvered into posterity as a creepy psychological case study in denial and displacement? "Gutsy"? Undoubtedly. She pioneered the White House scorched-earth policy, assailing her husband's accusers as "a vast right-wing conspiracy." But, if there is a vast right-wing conspiracy, it seems most likely to turn out to be a cunning plan to plant an oral-sex fiend in the Oval Office who's too busy being serviced or sued by subordinates to attend to his left-wing wife's schemes for mandatory federalized child care. "Accomplished"? Well, sadly, between the sex and the lawyers' meetings and golf with Vernon Jordan, the Clinton presidency ran out of time to accomplish things: That's the problem with trying to promote your agenda through a more

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popular, likeable partner. "Opinionated"? Absolutely. Mrs. Clinton has publicly come out in favor of a Palestinian state, not exactly a surefire winner in a New York Senate campaign.

Still, for now only two obstacles stand in her path. The first is the *soi-disant* "feral New York media": The First Lady could suddenly find herself facing brutal, searing questions like, "Mrs. Clinton, do you think part of the reason for this vast right-wing conspiracy is that many Americans still have trouble accepting the idea of a First Lady who is smart, gutsy, accomplished, and opinionated?" "I'm glad you asked me that, Katie . . ." The *New York Times*, for one, has already lapsed instinctively into the same disapproving tone of moral equivalence that distinguished much of its Cold War coverage. The First Lady and Mayor Giuliani: She's "controversial," but so's he; she inspires as much enmity as affection, but so does he; she's ruthless and unforgiving towards her enemies, but so's he; she hasn't been hit on by Bill Clinton recently, but neither has he. On the other hand, she looks good in pants, while he looks better in Julie Andrews's dress. So at least the voters will have a clear choice on something.

The other obstacle is the people of New York, renowned for their tough, in-your-face savvy. They're not like those patsies in New Zealand, to whom Mrs. Clinton revealed, concerning the distinctive spelling of her first name, that she had been named after Sir Edmund Hillary, conqueror of Everest. Those schmucko losers Down Under lapped it up, at least until the great man pointed out that he hadn't conquered Everest until 1953: Hillary Rodham was born in 1947, when Sir Edmund was an obscure New Zealand beekeeper and an unlikely inspiration for young parents in a Chicago suburb. If she tries that sappy stuff in the Empire State, she'd better make sure it's a beekeeper from Plattsburgh or Binghamton.

But by then it'll all be over. Nothing in Hillary's past suggests anything other than a tin ear for democratic politics. It was the First Lady, remember, who advised her husband to come down tough on Ken Starr in his speech to the nation after his grand-jury deposition last August. For three minutes, the public got a glimpse of the real Bill Clinton—petulant, vengeful, unrepentant—and his presidency briefly trembled. This is the woman who paid tribute to the murdered Yitzhak Rabin by recalling how, during negotiations with Yassir Arafat, she was generous enough to offer to let him stay inside for a cigarette, in violation of her smoke-free White House policy, if it were *really, truly* important to Middle East peace. Now there's tolerance for you.

The cruel fact is that, whenever the citizenry have been exposed to the smart, gutsy, accomplished, opinionated side of Hillary, they've recoiled in horror. She has a basic likeability problem, an observation I offer not in a mean-spirited partisan way because, God knows, the GOP's got it in spades. But she's the one woman President Clinton will never have to say "You might want to put some ice on that" to. She puts ice on everyone else: In the hurly-burly of a Senate race, she'll be frosting up the room at a hundred paces. If the Democrats want to nail their colors to the Clinton mast yet again, let them go ahead. Even the Republicans may not screw this one up. **NR**

Albright Then, Albright Now

From Democratic campaigns to the the Kosovo campaign, a long way.

JAY NORDLINGER

AFTER the Cold War, miracles abounded, large and small. One of those—smallish but interesting—was the rebirth of Madeleine K. Albright as . . . what? A hawk? A freedom fighter? John Foster Dulles in a skirt and floppy hat? Albright's transformation has indeed been amazing. This is not the woman we knew for all those years, when, as a leading Democratic voice on foreign policy, she was assailing Ronald Reagan and his band—even George Bush and his—as reckless, warmongering, and dangerous. America is, to be sure, the land of self-reinvention; long may it be. Yet the secretary of state's metamorphosis—the emergence of the New Albright, as striking as any New Nixon—has gone all but unnoticed.

The Kosovo war was widely considered Albright's doing, as she had been the Clinton-administration official who pressed most insistently for it. It was also considered something of a personal project: Albright was born in Czechoslovakia and fled first the Nazis and later the Communists. Some of her relatives—the family was Jewish—were killed in the camps; others, luckier, were trapped in a Communist state. She herself was luckiest of all, brought to America, where her opportunities proved limitless. She naturally views Eastern Europe as her region and the Kosovo horror as her special responsibility. In May, *Time* magazine featured her on its cover, with the legend "Albright at War." The photo showed her at her most bellicose: in a military jacket, complete with insignia, at an air base in Germany, barking into a cellular phone. Her face was the very picture of toughness and resolve. By comparison, Margaret Thatcher during the Falklands War was a whimpering doe.

Albright now portrays herself—and is uniformly portrayed in the press—as a child of Munich; that is, a woman stamped forever by the deal struck in that city in 1938, which sacrificed Czechoslovakia to the Nazi beast and, in fact, did not prevent broader war. She takes pains to explain that she is an enemy of appeasement, a quick and uncompromising foe of any aggressor. Yet this is largely how Reagan's men, and Bush's, saw themselves, and she mocked them constantly and opposed their every significant effort. "My mindset is Munich," she now assures us; "most of my generation's is Vietnam." Her boss, President Clinton, recently praised her for "not only learning the lessons of Munich, but also of

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Czechoslovakia under Communism." According to *Time*, she was stalwart at a 1998 meeting of foreign ministers, held in London. The Italians and French proposed that the group use softer language toward the Serbs. Albright's aide, Jamie Rubin, whispered to her that she should probably accept. She apparently shot back, "Where do you think we are, Munich?"

With each passing day, she sounds more and more like her old bogeyman, Reagan, sometimes even mimicking his precise language. She reminds the public that America is the world's "indispensable nation." What is "at stake" in Kosovo, she says, "is the principle that aggression doesn't pay." In an eerie echo of what the Reaganauts used to insist about Nicaragua, she sniffs, "Just because you can't act everywhere doesn't mean you don't act anywhere." We almost expect her to look at her detractors, shake her head with a sad smile, and quip, "There you go again."

Just as it was considered, in some quarters, impolite in the 1940s and '50s to discuss who had done what in the world war, and just as it was considered, again in some quarters, impolite in the 1970s and '80s to discuss who had done what in the Vietnam War, it is now considered impolite to reflect on who did what—and stood for what—during the Cold War. Recriminations are bad form. Yet a little wonderment is well nigh irresistible. Ronald Reagan, in his speech to the 1992 Republican convention, one of his last addresses, said that he had heard "those speakers at that other convention," the Democratic one, "saying, 'We won the Cold War.' And I couldn't helping thinking, 'What do you mean "we"?'" Caspar Weinberger, Reagan's defense secretary, can now only chuckle bemusedly at Albright's new persona: "The kindest way of putting it is that she has seen the light and realizes the error of her ways. Who knows? Maybe she's been reading Margaret Thatcher's memoirs."

Madeleine Albright by Roman Genn

Albright's story, in every way, is a peculiarly American one: A refugee, the daughter of a diplomat, she married into a newspaper fortune, made all the right connections, became a Washington hostess, and maneuvered her way to the very top of the profession she extravagantly loves. For almost her entire career, she spoke for dovish, unassertive, accommodationist positions, not at all dissimilar to the ones she is presently deriding as weak, irresponsible—practically un-American. She was, for example, a fierce opponent of the Gulf War. In March 1991, Democratic congressmen gathered for a retreat, demoralized that the war they had sought to block had gone so well and proven so popular with the public. Albright was there to comfort them and buck them up. She observed irritably, "All problems can't be solved by bombing the bejesus out of some small country."

Three years earlier, a U.S. warship had shot down an Iranian airliner. This was a horrible, tragic mistake—not unlike, say, the bombing of a Chinese embassy, or a Swedish ambassadorial residence, or a hospital (all of which occurred in the Kosovo war). But Albright castigated the Reaganauts for "murdering innocent people." About her (now) "indispensable nation," she crabbed, "We have been brought up to believe that we are special, but we have not been behaving as if we are special."

In both words and deeds, Madeleine Albright has—no doubt—come a long way.

THE PATH TO GLORY

Albright got her start, so to speak, in the early 1970s, when her children attended an elite Washington school, called Beauvoir. She busied herself with school affairs, including fundraising, for which she showed a particular aptitude. Her talents came to the attention of a fellow parent who was working on the presidential campaign of Sen. Edmund S. Muskie of Maine. Would Albright like to organize a big-money dinner for the candidate at a local hotel? She would be delighted, and she did it well. Muskie lost the 1972 Democratic nomination to George McGovern, but Albright later landed a position on the Muskie staff, first as a fundraiser and then as a legislative assistant.

In 1976, Albright received a Ph.D. in political science from Columbia, begun in the 1960s when the family lived in New York. Among her professors had been Zbigniew Brzezinski, the canny, tough-minded Pole whom President Carter would select as his national security advisor. When he went to the White House, Brzezinski plucked his old student from Muskie's office, making her his congressional liaison. Remembers one who worked with her then, "She was always dovish, when she was substantive at all. She was nothing like Brzezinski, as it concerned the Soviet Union. She wasn't crazy-liberal, but she was nowhere near Zbig." In 1988, Brzezinski would refuse to endorse Albright's candidate, Democratic nominee Michael Dukakis, whom he did not trust to safeguard the national interest.

After Carter's defeat at the hands of Reagan in 1980, Albright settled into life as a Georgetown hostess and networker. She was known for the dinners she staged at her home on 32nd Street, where out-of-power Democrats would go to chew over their dilemma and carp about the trigger-happy simpletons who had captured the executive branch. "These are working dinners," she once said defensively,

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"where people can surface their ideas to see what their validity is. People don't come for the food." She also arranged for a teaching position at Georgetown University, where she headed the Women in Foreign Service program. Her principal and abiding concern, however, was Democratic politics and the long wait for the Republicans to leave town. Asked her goal in 1991, she answered, "I would like to help elect a Democrat president."

In 1984, her horse, naturally, was Walter F. Mondale, whom she advised—even though, as it happens, he would smirk at those in thrall to, as he put it, "what I call 'the Munich analogy'" (as though he had invented the phrase). Albright was also chief foreign-policy counselor to the vice-presidential nominee, Geraldine Ferraro, who became a close friend. Recalled Ferraro later, "We hit it off right away. We tape-recorded our conversations, and I used to take the tapes with me and listen to them in the bathtub."

In this campaign, as before and after, Albright railed tirelessly against the Reagan administration for what she viewed as its undue belligerence toward the Soviet Union, its appalling adventurism around the globe, and its frightening and destabilizing defense buildup. She rarely put her positions on paper—indeed, she has written next to nothing, barely having even an op-ed piece to her name—but the press often went to her for soundbites, which she dispensed with professionalism and zest. "We have a president," she complained, "who seems to have a mindset against arms control." In 1980, Reagan had asked his famous question, "Are you better off than you were four years ago?" This time around, Albright argued, "the question should be, Do you feel safer?" The answer, she believed, should have been an obvious no.

If Albright was not an unambiguous nuclear-freezenik, she was certainly a fellow traveler of that movement. "Arms-control debates up to now have been carried on by the cognoscenti," she said, "and if you didn't understand the details of throw-weight, you couldn't participate intelligently. But one thing the freeze movement has done is strip away some of that mystique." A critical issue of the day was that of the "Euromissiles"—nuclear weapons that Reagan deployed in Western Europe in the face of tremendous pressure and even at the cost of the Soviets' quitting arms-control negotiations in a huff (they later returned, enabling Reagan to fashion his most advantageous pacts). Mondale was, to some degree, in favor of the deployment, provided it was coupled with "sustained negotiations." Ferraro flat-out opposed. As for Albright, she seems not to have declared herself unequivocally, but she did denounce "Reagan's definition of strength," which included "a destabilizing weapon like the MX, an unnecessary bomber like the B-1, and an unrealistic defense system like Star Wars."

So too was she contemptuous of the 1983 invasion of Grenada. "Of course Grenada worked," she scoffed on television. "It was the Redskins [of the National Football League] versus the Little Sisters of the Poor, and the score was 101 to nothing." Mondale allowed that he could have supported the operation if it had been truly necessary, as the Reagan administration claimed, "to save American lives"—but not for any strategic reason. Ferraro forthrightly opposed the invasion because she did not accept that Americans were, in fact, in danger. Four years later, Dukakis would state that "the only legitimate basis for our invading Grenada was to protect American lives and property," adding, "I'm not sure we'll ever know whether or not American lives and property were in jeopardy."

AGAINST REAGAN AND BUSH, UNFAILINGLY

Mondale and Ferraro, of course, went on to lose 49 states. Albright went back to her dinners, her politicking, and her television appearances. She never missed a chance to tweak Reagan and his team for their unreasonable muscularity. As one of her Republican adversaries at the time observes, "She was out of office, so whatever the Republicans were doing—it really didn't matter what—she had to support the opposite. And that demanded that she be dovish." In 1986, for instance, in one of her scores of interviews on the *MacNeil-Lehrer NewsHour*, Albright chastised the administration for its expulsion of 55 Soviets from the United States—persons who, in the classic euphemism, had "engaged in activities incompatible with their diplomatic status." "If I were a Soviet," she noted, "I would consider this kind of counterproductive if you are trying to improve the U.S.–Soviet dialogue." The expulsion had been "a little quick," and "I don't think the numbers had to be quite so large," because, for Moscow, it was "such a slap in the face." After all, she said, in one of her trademark simplifications, "Do we want an arms-control agreement or do we want to kind of have a more hostile relationship with the Soviet Union?"

By the time the 1988 campaign rolled around, Albright was itching to be principal advisor to the Democratic Number One—and she became so. She remarked to an interviewer, "I've worked very hard to get my credentials together, and I have the feeling I am able at this stage to make a contribution." In Dukakis, however, she had a shaky product. He had been a true freezenik, and there were few important Democrats to the left of him on foreign policy. Yet Albright spun for him like mad, claiming, hilariously, that he was "an active internationalist in the tradition of Harry Truman and John Kennedy." Dukakis, she said, "has a very good sense that our security problems consist of more than guns: It also consists of the threat to our economic viability, the deficit," and so on—a standard Democratic line of the period. Besides which, said Albright, Dukakis "will not be going around taking unilateral action like some lonesome cowboy." She would hit this "lonesome cowboy" theme hard, saying at another point, "The role of the U.S. is not to impose our views on our allies like some lonesome cowboy . . ."

Over and over, Albright bristled at the contention that Reagan's military refortification and his robust, anti-Communist foreign policy had enhanced the nation's position around the globe and brought about a sounder relationship with the Soviet Union, not to mention undreamed-of arms control. "Peace Through Strength" was, to her, a lie. "There is no proof," she pouted, "that the military buildup" had anything to do with a safer world. In 1989, she would say, in a typical formulation, "The irony of all this

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is that Ronald Reagan tells us that he won the Cold War, and, whether it's over or not, he bankrupted our budget so we do not have the funds to take advantage of the massive changes. We're absolutely hogtied to the idea we have to have a Stealth bomber and two mobile missiles." We simply "do not have enough money," she griped, "and part of that has to do with, I think, a misconstruing of how we did win the Cold War."

Throughout the campaign, she blasted the Republican nominee, George Bush, for his "Cold War rhetoric": "I don't think we need to go around rattling sabers." She objected to his "referring back to the terminology of the Cold War" in a speech at Fulton, Mo., where Churchill named the Iron Curtain. Bush's transgression was having "basically talked about the Iron Curtain and used a lot of terminology that made us look backward." Nowhere to be found was the blunt, truth-valuing Albright of the Kosovo war.

Albright was always faulting Republicans for 'rattling sabers.' And to her, Peace Through Strength was a lie.

Most extraordinary was an interview she gave in October 1988 on a television show called *American Interests*, hosted by Morton Kondracke. Antimissile defenses were a hot topic of the hour, and almost the whole of the Democratic party opposed them, although a few were willing to countenance their use as a "bargaining chip" with the Soviets. Albright lambasted Reagan's prized project as "a fantasy," and "therefore, in terms of discussing bargaining chips, what do we gain out of it, of spending trillions of dollars on a fantasy program?" But was it not true, pressed Kondracke, that, whatever its feasibility, the program had spooked and depressed the Soviets, driving them to greater concessions? "I think there's a real question about what drove them," answered Albright. "The truth is that they are in very deep economic trouble. . . . In my estimation, the Soviets are not impressed when you have billions of dollars in deficit, when you are building weapons that don't work, or when you, in effect, are putting money into some crazy astrodome plan of the sky."

Then there was the matter of Nicaragua and the Reagan Doctrine—the policy, christened by journalist Charles Krauthammer, of backing insurgency movements against Communist dictatorships. If Dukakis were elected, asked Kondracke, would that be the end of the Reagan Doctrine? "You bet," Albright replied. "Especially as far as Central America is concerned." She favored the "Arias Plan" for Nicaragua, named for the Costa Rican president who would win the Nobel peace prize, a plan, she said, that the Reagan administration had given "the back of its hand." The Reaganauts were at fault because "they've always held out the option that the aid to the contras would be resumed." And "the result of the Reagan Doctrine in Central America is that we have given the Ortegas an excuse to militarize their society." The United States, as imperialist meddler, had gone "swaggering around" and now Reagan was "afraid that peace might break out."

Albright did allow, on another occasion, that aid to the mujahadeen in Afghanistan was legitimate, because "the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, and nobody invaded Nicaragua." Moreover, "aid to the contras has provided the Sandinistas with an excuse for further repression." In her opinions and language, Albright in this period differed little from the leading scourges of the administration on Central America—Jim Wright, David Bonior, Christopher Dodd.

TOWARD A NEW LIFE

After Dukakis's battering at the polls, Albright became president of a liberal Democratic think tank, the Center for National Policy, among whose founders were Vernon Jordan, Cyrus Vance, and even Warren Beatty. When President Bush launched the Gulf War, Albright was aghast, arguing for a continuation of sanctions and negotiations. None of her arguments in the Balkans today came to her tongue then. When Bush rebuffed Soviet attempts at diplomatic stalling, Albright explained, "The Soviets want Saddam Hussein to save face, and the U.S. wants his head." Bush had unwisely "personalized" the conflict: the American president versus the Butcher of Baghdad. Some months after the war's conclusion, Albright, noting problems in Yugoslavia, was conspicuously crotchety and bitter at what Bush had accomplished in the Gulf: "We are so busy celebrating how we managed to institute world order in the Persian Gulf that it is interesting to see how powerless we seem to be in this situation." A year after that, when the administration was considering whether to attack Iraq again, Albright said, "If Bush has to go in and bomb Iraq now, he may only point up that he screwed up the first time." Whether Albright, at this remove—following her own experiences in Iraq, Yugoslavia, and elsewhere—has any greater sympathy for her predecessors remains unclear.

With the end of the Cold War, Albright, like the "prison-house of nations" itself, was liberated. She even felt free, in a 1992 *USA Today* column, to speak of "totalitarian evil." And when she joined the Clinton administration as U.N. ambassador in 1993—her shot at the big leagues at last—she was known as rather hardline, particularly in contrast to her colleagues, such as Warren Christopher, Sandy Berger, and Strobe Talbott. Her rhetoric became practically Churchillian. She had a well-publicized tussle over Bosnia with Colin Powell, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, during which she asked, "What's the point of having this superb military you're always talking about if we can't use it?" When interrogated by reporters about the necessity of the 1994 invasion of Haiti, she snapped, "If Haiti were threatened by Communism, none of you would be raising these questions"—yet Albright, when she had her chance in the Cold War, usually shrank from what others, fortunately, were prepared to do.

Albright has led a genuinely impressive life, and there is much to admire about her, as made unmistakable by two

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recent biographies of her—one by *Washington Post* reporter Michael Dobbs and the other by *Time*'s Ann Blackman. She has always been privileged by material wealth, but she is acquainted with struggle, not least because of a brutal divorce in 1983—without which, she has said repeatedly, she would not have been spurred to her present success. But neither of her biographers really touches on her positions in the final stage of the Cold War or seeks to hold her to account for them. Nor does anyone else. We are surely not in the business of handing out white feathers, but we may well ask, Where were you when we needed you, and, Have you gained any appreciation of the hard, often thankless work performed by those who concluded the "long twilight struggle"? It is they, we might cluck, who made it relatively safe for Albright, Clinton, Talbott, and Berger to hold high office. Caspar Weinberger concedes that it is tempting to resent the near-total absence of self-examination and humility in this bunch: "They fought us every step of the way."

So Madeleine Albright has flexed her muscles in Kosovo. She is heralded as the conscience of the West, the benefactor of millions, the scourge of another genocidal—though this time not mustachioed—dictator. In May, turning to her, Clinton said, "Secretary Albright, thank you for being able to redeem the lessons of your life story by standing up for the freedom of the people in the Balkans." Albright is indeed a heroine to Kosovars and others staving off murder and degradation. To them, she is a positively Reagan-like figure—just another miracle of this new, decidedly better age. **NR**

Inept or Corrupt?

The enigma of Janet Reno and Justice.

BYRON YORK

NINE months ago, relations between Capitol Hill Republicans and Janet Reno were at an all-time low. The attorney general had roundly rejected the advice of top investigator Charles La Bella that she seek an independent counsel in the campaign-finance scandal. Before that, she had ignored the same recommendation from FBI director Louis Freeh. For a while, Reno refused even to let lawmakers see a heavily redacted version of La Bella's analysis of the case, which led to a serious but unsuccessful attempt to hold her in contempt of Congress. It was hard to imagine relations between the Hill and Reno getting any worse.

Until now. News of the Justice Department's failure to act in the Chinese spy case has led to new calls for Reno's head. Less publicized—but equally galling to some Republicans—is the department's decision to make lenient plea-bargain deals with John Huang and Charlie Trie, perhaps the two most important figures in the campaign-finance case. Taken together, the latest developments have Reno's critics asking a simple, if harsh, question: Is she corrupt, incompetent, or some combination of both?

Incompetent, vote some of those most knowledgeable about Justice's botched spy probe. "National security, espionage, and counterintelligence were never a top priority for her," says a former department official. "She's suffering for it in this Los Alamos fiasco. It was inevitable that something like this would happen." Reno, according to prosecutors who have served under her, has always been more interested in trendier causes, like deadbeat dads, abortion-clinic violence, and school safety.

While she concentrated on those, Reno neglected some of the agencies most critical to national security. By many accounts, she has been indifferent to the department's Office of Intelligence Policy and Review, which is the agency that refused to okay a request to wiretap Los Alamos espionage suspect Wen Ho Lee. As much attention as that has attracted, it's nothing new under Reno. Back in 1995, some insiders complained that the office turned down too many FBI requests to seek search and wiretap warrants for suspected spies. And Reno drew criticism from both her colleagues and Congress when she tried to reorganize the department's internal-security section in a way that placed less emphasis on prosecuting alleged spies. She later dropped the idea.

Reno also de-emphasized the work of the department's criminal division as a whole. For reasons that she has never adequately explained, she chose to leave the top job in the division—one of the two or three most important posts at the Justice Department—empty from 1995 until last year. "The criminal-division head job was vacant when the Los Alamos intelligence was obtained," says the former official. "The division was never briefed on the case."

STONEWALLING

Perhaps the incompetence argument explains some of that. But to what does one attribute the department's actions during the Cox committee's investigation of Chinese espionage? The committee's report says Justice refused to cooperate, forcing the committee "to expend a major part of its available investigative resources in retracing the Justice Department's steps, often in the face of protests from Justice Department officials."

And not only did Justice not supply information to the committee—it tried to keep other government agencies from doing so as well. "If we sent a document request to an executive department," ranking committee Democrat Norm Dicks said recently, "[Justice] would say the executive department couldn't respond to the committee's request, even if it were a subpoena, because they needed first to get in the middle of it." The committee was eventually able to get around that, but members remained frustrated by the department's delaying tactics. "If . . . you're trying to look at this as a national-security matter, then you want to get to the bottom of these things in a hurry," Dicks said. "You don't want to drag it out."

Even when one concedes that Justice performed atrocious-

Mr. York is an investigative writer with *The American Spectator*.

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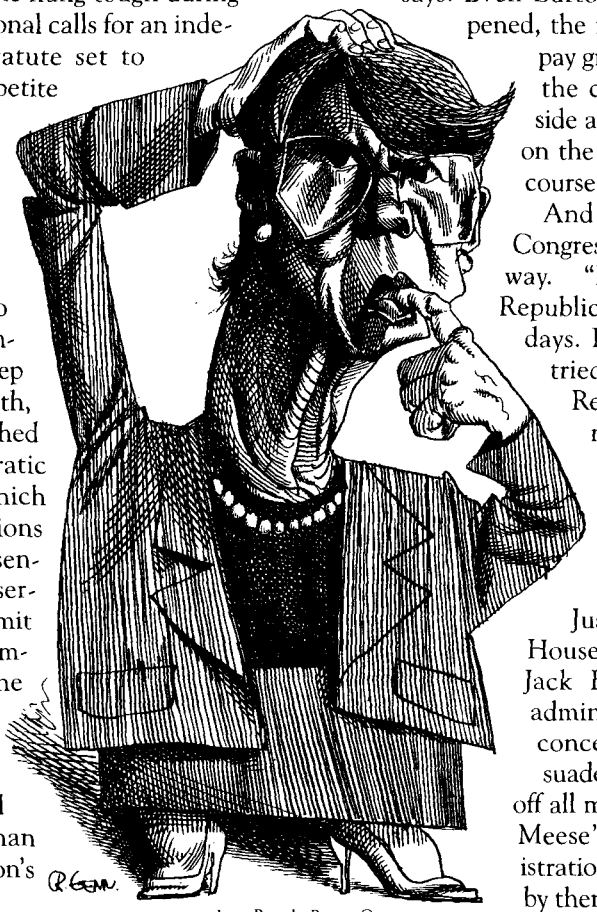
ly in the spy investigation, it is likely that the scandal would not be causing such rancor on Capitol Hill were it not for the deep well of distrust created by Reno's handling of the campaign-finance probe. The reason that so few Republicans trust her to do the right thing now is that she didn't do the right thing then.

During the critical first year of the probe, Reno assigned the case to an inexperienced lawyer and set limits that virtually ensured the investigation would go nowhere while precious time ticked away, witnesses fled the country, and evidence was destroyed. In September 1997, after public exposure of the investigation's shortcomings, Reno brought in the well-respected La Bella and then ignored his findings while listening only to favored staffers who opposed an independent counsel. La Bella, by his own public account, became persona non grata at the department and last month left the government altogether.

But all of that bought Reno time; she hung tough during the most intensive period of congressional calls for an independent counsel. Now, with the statute set to expire soon and virtually no public appetite for setting up a new, wide-ranging campaign-finance independent counsel, it's clear that she's won the game.



Janet Reno by Roman Genn

TYING UP LOOSE ENDS

To make matters worse, she seems to be eagerly clearing the decks of the campaign cases she fought so hard to keep within her own department. Last month, prosecutors announced they had reached a plea agreement with Democratic fundraiser John Huang under which Huang will admit campaign infractions from 1992 and 1994 and receive a sentence of probation and community service. Huang was not required to admit any wrongdoing involving the 1996 campaign. Shortly before the deal, the department accepted a similarly soft, no-jail plea from Charlie Trie, the presidential friend who was a major source of illegal campaign cash and who tried to contribute more than $600,000 in illegal money to Bill Clinton's legal-defense fund.

All this leaves Republicans feeling had—again. At a recent hearing, Sen. Fred Thompson bitterly pointed out that he wanted information from Huang during the Governmental Affairs Committee's 1997 campaign-finance investigation. But the Justice Department said no, telling Thompson that if he offered Huang immunity for testimony, it could jeopardize the whole campaign-finance case. "None of us want to mess up an important prosecution, especially if there's a possibility that the person is going to cooperate," Thompson explained. So he held off on Huang and other witnesses. Now Justice has let Huang go with a wrist-slap and no accounting of his role in the illegal fundraising of 1996. "That's the fix that we're all in now," Thompson bemoans.

In the House, Government Reform and Oversight Committee chairman Dan Burton is even angrier. "Nobody can be that incompetent, and you can quote me on that," he says. "This is insane. She has to know what's she's doing. She's blocking for the president, and I believe she's done that on Wen Ho Lee, and she's done that in campaign finance."

But Republicans stop short of connecting the two scandals now engulfing Reno. There's no denying that she and the department downplayed the investigation of Chinese espionage at the same time the president was happily accepting illegal campaign contributions from China. But did one fact guide the other? "I do not see a Chinese operative paying money into the presidential campaign coffers and being able to fix counter-intelligence investigations at the working level in the FBI and the Justice Department," the former official says. Even Burton stresses that, whatever happened, the responsibility goes above Reno's pay grade. "The president knew about the campaign contributions on one side and he knew about the espionage on the other. And he did nothing." Of course, Reno helped him do nothing.

And she stays in office. What can Congress do about it? Impeach her? No way. "Impeach" is not a word Republicans throw around much these days. Hold her in contempt? Burton tried last year; lacking top Republican leadership support, the move died with the 105th Congress.

Of course, if they wanted to, Republicans could take their cue from the toughest, meanest Democrat ever to oversee a Justice Department. In 1985, House Judiciary Committee member Jack Brooks, angry at the Reagan administration's opposition to a law concerning military contracts, persuaded the committee to vote to cut off all money to attorney general Edwin Meese's office. The Reagan administration backed down. In 1991, Brooks, by then chairman, threatened to cut off the entire Justice Department until the Bush administration acceded to his demand for an investigation of the Inslaw affair, a decidedly minor scandal over a government software contract. Bush caved. Today, even though they have a vastly more momentous issue, some Republicans believe they'd be crucified in the press if they tried such tactics. They're probably right.

So look for them to continue to call for Janet Reno to resign. And continue to summon her to testify at one hearing or the other. And continue to be frustrated by her nonanswers. Until either she or Bill Clinton decides it's time to go. **NR**

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OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON, D.C.

June 6, 1999

Dear Dick,

As you know, I was always one of your biggest champions around here. There were some—let's not get into the First You-Know-What—who weren't so appreciative of your tireless efforts to make campaign '96 such a success. But we won and that's that. And if I overlooked sending a hearty "thank you" your way, let me rectify that. Hey, Dick Morris, thanks!

I'll admit, I had reservations. But when you took my idea of "triangulation" and weaved it into a complete political strategy, I knew you had the goods!

When you got into trouble, I was deeply shocked and, frankly, hurt, at the way some of the folks around here treated you. You deserved better, Dick, for your loyalty to our mission of building a bridge to the 21st century.

Would you like to join the Gore team? Because, we'd be proud to have you.

Dick, I know you value your privacy—who doesn't?—and I know you prefer a "behind-the-scenes" situation. I'm the same way in many respects. (Years ago, when Erich Segal told me that he was basing his first novel, Love Story, on Tipper and me, I said to him, "Erich, write whatever you want, just don't make it obviously about Tipper and me." He didn't, and I've always appreciated it.)

I know you'd be more comfortable acting in an advisory capacity to our campaign, and that, in such an advisory role, you may prefer not to tell, oh, let's just for argument's sake say, anyone at all that you're working for us. We'd be happy to work it that way.

Tipper and I would love to see you soon, in our home. Please use the Rock Creek Park delivery entrance. Come any time after dark.

Al

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
WASHINGTON, D.C.

June 6, 1999

Dear Dick,

It just now occurred to me, what with the hurly-burly of the '96 campaign (thank you, by the way!!) that I may have given you the impression that I don't respect your political instincts or value your friendship. Nothing could be further from the truth!!

Dick, how long have we known each other? Twenty-five years? We've both said some things—and written some things—that we probably didn't mean, and I'm sure we've both wanted to take some of them back. Why don't we just forget the past and look to the future?

I guess what I'm trying to say is that I'd love to hear your thoughts on the upcoming New York Senate race, which, as you know, I am exploring the possibility of exploring my candidacy for. I'd like to pick your brain about strategy, etc., and just kind of catch-up like old friends. Also, I'd very much like to win and I know how good you are about that.

I'll be in New York next Tuesday, then on Thursday, then Saturday and Sunday, then the whole next week, then for the first three days of the week after that, then for the first three weeks of next month, then all of the month after that, and for the first four days after Labor Day.

Let's have lunch on one of those days, Dick, and talk about the future. Isn't it time we worked together, just the two of us, on something? I mean, isn't it possible that what really kept you and me from being friends wasn't our different styles or attitudes, but HIM?

Let me know which day works for you. I'll have someone pick you up in the parking garage of a convenient Midtown hotel and take you to our meeting place. I think it's best if we keep this on the q.t. for a while, don't you? People can be such gossips.

Hillary

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HELP!!!

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BUT THE INNOCENT CIVILIANS HAVE ALL SURRENDERED.
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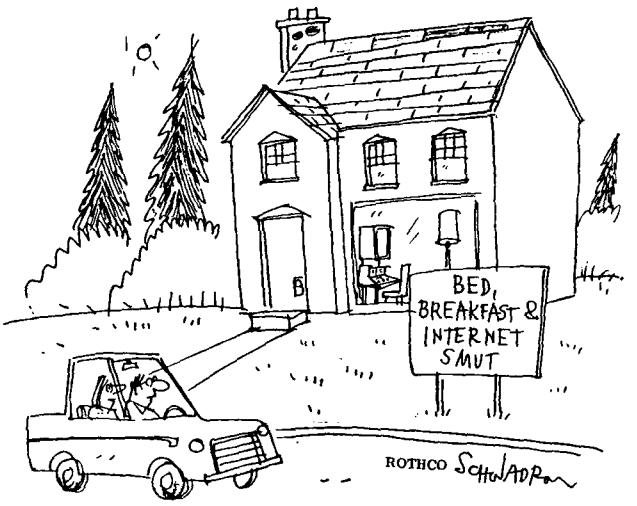

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Hemingway Ltd.

KENNETH S. LYNN

True at First Light, by Ernest Hemingway, edited by Patrick Hemingway (Scribners', 320 pp., $26)

Ernest Hemingway by Roman Genn

ERNEST HEMINGWAY'S name is on the cover, but the publication of *True at First Light* is an important event in celebrity culture, not in literary culture. For the grim fact is that this "fictional memoir" of the first phase of the 54-year-old Hemingway's final visit to East Africa in 1953–54 reflects a marvelous writer's disastrous loss of talent. His second son, Patrick, has extrapolated it from the untitled first draft of a manuscript that had swelled to more than 200,000 words before being abandoned forever.

The main drama of the book consists of vainglorious and largely predictable accounts of killing a lion, a leopard, and assorted other beasts, the cumulative effect being to make one yearn to reread "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" (1936). In addition, we are offered a grab bag of disjointed if occasionally poignant memories of Wyoming, Michigan, northern Spain, and Paris; random comments—mostly hostile—about other writers; appalling notations of the author's intake of alcohol, beginning with beer at breakfast and extending to shots of gin in bed in the middle of the night (so as to ward off sweat-drenched nightmares); and unbearably kittenish conversations with "Miss Mary"—Hemingway's fourth wife, Mary Welsh—about how much they love each other and what fun they are having.

Mr. Lynn, a former professor of English at Harvard and history at Johns Hopkins, is the author of *Hemingway*.

As for the veracity of the story, the author asserts in Chapter 4 that "I make the truth as I invent it truer than it would be." What this means in practice is that *First Light* is a fantasy about an all-knowing, all-seeing panjandrum who never falls into the self-degradation of the real-life Hemingway in Africa.

The non-fictional truth is that one day, for instance, he was so inebriated that he fell out of a fast-moving Land Rover and cut his face rather badly and sprained a shoulder. Furthermore, his drinking made for embarrassing inconsistencies in his shooting, which he attempted to minimize by taking credit for kills made by a sharper-eyed companion. After a particularly inept showing he started excusing himself, only to be cut off by a disgusted exclamation from the renowned hunter Philip Percival. "Oh Ernest, don't give me that nonsense. The whole thing has been a disgrace!" And despite the impression of attractiveness he creates in the book, the Wakamba girl named Debba whom Hemingway took as his "fiancée" was "an evil-smelling bit of camp trash," according to the game warden, Denis Zaphiro. Debba's odoriferous presence also served to intensify Mary Hemingway's unhappiness at having to listen to the cock-strutting boasts of a husband whose drastically diminished sexual prowess made him incapable of staging anything like the three-times-in-a-single-night extravaganza described in *First Light*.

On the other hand, in making it clear that he is thrilled by the sexually crisscrossed aspects of Mary's physical appearance, the memoirist is being totally, indeed helplessly honest. Bisexual images were imprinted on Hemingway's mind in early childhood, once his strong-willed, incipiently lesbian mother, Grace Hall Hemingway, decided to raise him and his slightly older sister, Marcelline, as same-sex twins. At times, Grace dressed the "twins" as little boys; more often, as little girls. While their hair length, too, was subject to change and not always identical, the style Grace came to prefer for them both was the "Dutch dolly," in which the hair is cut straight across the forehead and straight across the ears. Well after Grace had abandoned the rest of the masquerade, this vestige of twinhood was retained.

When Hemingway was in control of his art, he successfully incorporated these obsessions into his writing—as in the brilliantly conceived love stories he told in *The Sun Also Rises*, *A Farewell to Arms*, and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. *First Light*, however, in its narrative barrenness, simply ladles out pointless examples of the author's kinkiness. We are told that Mary combines "the shortest of African haircuts" with "the pure Hamitic face of a boy" and "a body . . . as womanly as a good Masai young wife"; that Hemingway is consumed with curiosity about the way she "will look with her new haircut" when she returns from a beauty parlor in Nairobi; and that upon seeing her again he is wonder-struck by her close-cropped

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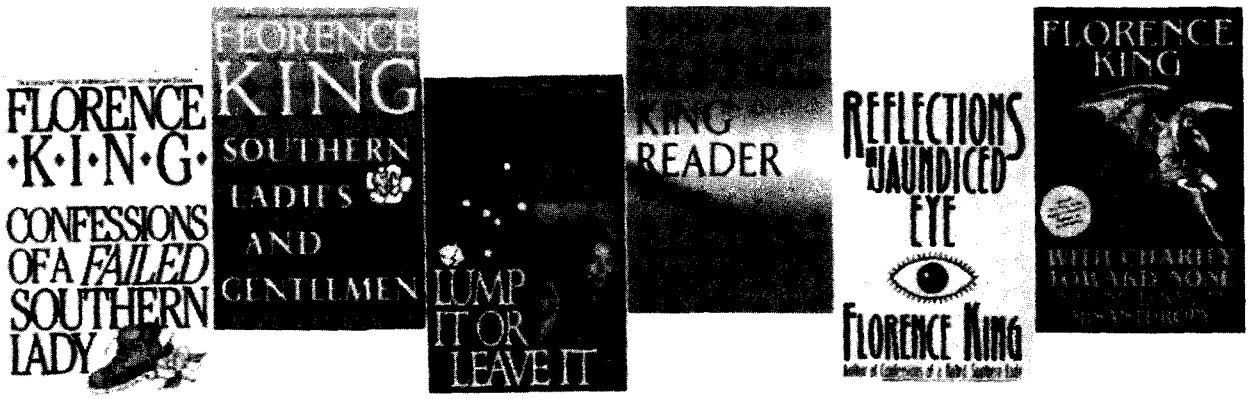
ALL THE KING'S BOOKS



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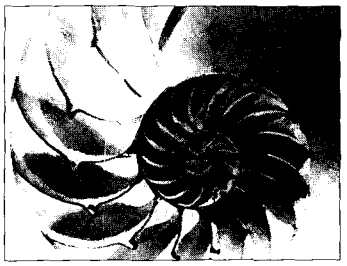
splendor. "How did you get such a fine Kamba haircut?" he exclaims. "I cut it square at the sides some more this afternoon," she proudly replies. And so on.

Looking back on his editorial labors at the conclusion of the book, Patrick Hemingway declares that his two brothers, Jack and Gregory, share his belief that "this job was worth doing." Hemingway would unquestionably have been outraged by his sons' refusal to honor his judgment that the manuscript was unworthy of publication, a problem that Patrick carefully sidesteps both in his concluding remarks and in his slickly dishonest Introduction, with its pretentious invocations of Shakespeare's *Tempest* and Virgil's *Georgics*. Nor does he have the courage to comment on his father's sudden outburst in the middle of *First Light* that "I was worried about all three of my children for different causes." If Hemingway was worried that his sons were weaklings, each in his own way, and that over the long haul they would not amount to much, one cannot blame him, although since his death they have certainly made a rather lucrative career out of exploiting his name.

As the distinguished critic Frederick Crews noted in *The Critics Bear It Away*, the image of Hemingway as a great sportsman and aficionado has been "cultivated by the surviving members of the Hemingway clan for the sake of its business ventures, including Hemingway Ltd., a corporation formed to market the label 'Hemingway' for use on tastefully chosen fishing rods, safari clothes, and (surely the ultimate triumph of greed over taste) shotguns." Readying *First Light* for presentation to the bookstores—as well as to the Book-of-the-Month Club, which has taken it as a main selection, to *The New Yorker*, which has purchased first serial rights, and to the eleven publishers in Europe alone with whom deals have been inked—was "a job worth doing" only in the crassest sense of those words. For the book, too, promises to make big bucks for the old man's aging boys. **NR**



The Final Descent

JEFFREY HART

Hemingway: The Final Years, by Michael Reynolds (Norton, 352 pp., $30)

In the vestibule of his home in Ketchum, Idaho, at 7:30 A.M. on July 2, 1961, two shot-gun blasts—heard on the last page of this last volume of Michael Reynold's massive four-volume biography—ended the life of Ernest Hemingway. He was 61, physically and mentally shattered, and looked and acted 90. Reynolds tells the familiar story in enormous detail, much of it new.

Of those details, more in a moment. But first let us remind ourselves why Hemingway is so important. Through the attrition of ordinary use and abuse, words experience sickness and death. The major writer makes them live again. As T. S. Eliot put it, he purifies the language of the tribe. Between 1925 (*In Our Time*) and 1929 (*A Farewell to Arms*) Hemingway did this with extraordinary consistency.

He did it by combining simplicity of vocabulary with various ways of generating powerful suggestion. Much of the meaning remained unstated but nevertheless powerfully felt. Sometimes this use of language moved toward eloquent silence. The important, the ultimate things cannot be said. Here, for example, in rhythm, diction, and the detail chosen, the prose expresses the emotional numbness of a wounded and hospitalized soldier:

> In the fall the war was always there, but we did not go to it any more. It was cold in the fall in Milan and the dark came very early. Then the electric lights came on, and it was pleasant along the streets looking in the windows. There was much game hanging outside the shops, and the snow powdered in the fur of the foxes and the wind blew their tails.

Every detail of such writing, in this case drawn from the short story "In Another Country," requires you to think.

Among critics, I am slightly out of line in rating *A Farewell to Arms* Hemingway's best novel. One part of the book's overall "figure in the carpet," as James called it, locates the protagonist, military ambulance driver Frederic Henry, behind a window, looking out. As the novel famously begins:

> In the late summer of that year we lived in a house in a village that looked across the river and the plain to the mountains. In the bed of the river there were pebbles and boulders, dry and white in the sun, and the water was clear and swiftly moving and blue in the channels. Troops went by the house and down the road and the dust they raised powdered the leaves of the trees.

Again, the apparently simple sentences are rich in suggestion. The observer, inside the house, is temporarily

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Hemingway's fourth wife, Mary Welsh, saw it through to 1961 with an impossible man.

■

safe, the scene tranquil, except for the troops. Marching to the Front, many will soon die, as is suggested by the dust they raise. These "simple" sentences reverberate throughout the novel. Looking out of various windows, Frederic sees death in multiple forms—artillery firing, snow falling, a military cemetery full of fresh graves—and he takes refuge in various rooms: transitory though civilized hotels and the emotional "home" of his love for Catherine, a nurse.

All of this bears down upon the following three sentences late in the novel. Frederic and Catherine are in their final hotel room, in Lausanne, waiting to go to the hospital where she will die in childbirth. What has gone before endows the following sentences with rending Virgilian-elegiac power:

> The windows of the room looked out on a wet garden with a wall topped by an iron fence. Across the street, which sloped steeply, was another hotel with a similar wall and garden. I looked out

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at the rain falling in the fountain of the garden.

Every word here counts. We all inhabit such hotel rooms. Transitory "rooms" are man's fate. From its very first sentence this novel has worked to achieve this passage. And how else could the novel end, other than it does, with Frederic at last outside the window? "After a while I went out and left the hospital and walked back to the hotel in the rain." This novel puts war in the foreground, but its real subject is our nakedness before death. We are all finally outside the window, like the soldiers of the opening.

As these passages suggest, far from being the "tough guy" of his later mask, Hemingway was deliquescently sensitive. Biographers attempt to trace this vulnerability to his childhood, to his 1918 wound, and so on; Reynolds gives us enough data for us to make up our own minds, and he rides no thesis.

After 1929 Hemingway descended into disaster both literary and personal, one indication of which was an increasing verbosity. He pontificated, no longer associating with writers and painters but with movie actors and socialites. Then appeared his non-fiction works about bullfighting and big-game hunting, in which he is the central wordy figure. As Edmund Wilson put it, he became his own worst invented character.

Hemingway's life also slid out of control. His first marriage, to Hadley Richardson, was wrecked in 1927 by the predatory Pauline Pfeiffer. Martha Gellhorn descended on him in 1936 at Sloppy Joe's in Key West and ousted Pauline. Hemingway's drinking became gargantuan—right up there with Faulkner and Eugene O'Neill.

Reynolds presents decisive evidence that Martha and his sons perceived a different man emerging in 1943–44 as he guzzled liquor and chased fantasy U-boats on his yacht *Pilar* in the Caribbean. He finally went to Europe, assaulted Omaha Beach in the third wave, and wrote great journalism about this. But he rushed into Paris ahead of General LeClerc, liberated the Ritz Bar, and stayed drunk for a week. His fourth wife, Mary Welsh, saw it through to 1961 with an impossible man, unpredictable, violent, vicious, and depressed.

His physical clumsiness, auto accidents, plane crashes, and assorted foolishness brought him multiple concussions. His *Across the River and into the Trees* (1950) was a self-parody and a critical disaster. He accumulated vast quantities of manuscript that he proved unable to shape or cut. Where once he had written 500 careful words per day, now words poured forth without control.

The condition of the manuscript material he left behind, which can be viewed at the Kennedy Library in Boston, is scary. It consists of thousands of handwritten pages, much of it scrawled, chaotic, banal, trivial—verbal elephantiasis.

By the time he was 61, Hemingway was a physical and mental wreck beset by failing memory, rocketing blood pressure, liver and heart disease, paranoid suspicions, and clinical depression. He was a walking pharmacy of drugs, some perhaps dangerously incompatible. He tried to walk into an airplane propeller. The theme of suicide had been present in his fiction since his first story in *In Our Time*, "Indian Camp" (1925), and suicide ran in his family. But in 1961 he knew it was exit time. **NR**

Old Turks

DAVID PRYCE-JONES

Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire, by Jason Goodwin (Holt, 352 pp., $32.50)

MUSLIMS on the march, the Ottoman Turks built an empire reaching from Asia deep into the Balkans and the Mediterranean. The immense Ottoman archives in today's Istanbul are a tribute to their military and organizational skills. For a long time after the capture of Christian Byzantium in 1453, they appeared unstoppable. Many European rulers and intellectuals feared that Christian civilization could not hold the line against Ottoman Islam. Here was a power struggle as well as an ideological war—an earlier version of the Cold War against Communism.

Unlike the Soviet Union, the Ottoman empire expired slowly. In the famous phrase of Tsar Nicholas I, the empire had become "the sick man of Europe" and its dismemberment would benefit everyone. In the conventional wisdom of the last century, the Turks had become backward, corrupt, outside the rule of law, oppressors of the minorities among them, no longer to be feared but still held in contempt. After the First World War, the Allies took over the remains of the empire, and the last sultan went into exile.

Nobody of stature at the time suggested that the Ottoman empire might have been consigned to the scrap heap a little too lightly. In its unique way, it had been a pluralist society. Ethnic and religious minorities had been allowed their own identity and leaders, their customs and worship, simply in return for taxes and submission to the state. When these

Jason Goodwin retrieves the details that reveal the Ottomans in war and peace.

minorities rebelled, and in due course acquired independent nation-states of their own, they proved unable to grant to others the rights they had demanded for themselves. Witness the patterns of breakdown in Arab countries, in Yugoslavia and Cyprus and other former Ottoman provinces. In the light of these modern horrors, the Ottoman achievement has come to seem more and more remarkable. Comparison with the Soviet Union ceases at this point, since Communist theory and practice had no redeeming features.

Lords of the Horizons is another step in revising hoary anti-Ottoman prejudice. To be sure, absolute rule generated its usual cruelty, corruption, and lawlessness. An elaborate ritual of murder in the ruling family decided who was to become sultan. The Janissaries formed an elite corps composed of kidnapped Christian boys brought up as Muslims and slaves. Owing loyalty exclusively to the sultan, they threw into the Bos-

Mr. Pryce-Jones is the author of, among other books, *The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs.*

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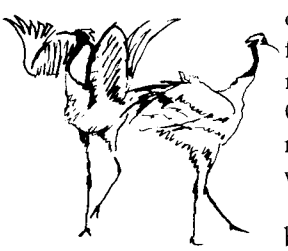
phorus the corpses of anyone he didn't like. More rational than it might seem, the system worked until the Janissaries in the end saw themselves as more powerful than the sultan, and had to be suppressed accordingly.



Jason Goodwin delights in the contrast between the frightful means so often used and the settled order that resulted. Color and diversity bring out a virtuoso prose, which can sometimes overheat. Not a history, *Lords of the Horizons* is only loosely chronological. Dispensing with narrative, the chapters instead each have a theme: the importance of the annual campaign to capture new territory, for example, and the part played in the Ottoman psyche by the concept of the borderlands, the absence of clock-time, the role of the city or of the sea, with a concluding essay of great charm on dogs. A sketch of Suleyman the Magnificent and the failure of the Ottomans to capture Vienna in 1683 are among set pieces in other self-contained chapters.

Scholars such as Bernard Lewis have brought out how Turks saw their own society. Goodwin relies for his material almost entirely on the literature left down the centuries by foreign observers, either European ambassadors or travelers. Although sometimes prisoners of their own culture, these Westerners provided a fascinating record, with many observations still valid today. Among them were Busbecq, Baron Wratislaw, Paul Rycaut, Pietro della Valle and other Venetians and Genoese, Lady Mary Montagu, Sir Charles Eliot, and many more familiar to the specialist but perhaps not to the general reader. One whom he omits is Stratford Canning, the diplomat who spent most of his life in Istanbul, and who almost singlehandedly persuaded the British government to prop up the Turks in their decline. When finally the Janissaries were massacred, he was there, and watched the Bosphorus turn red.

Like a magpie swooping on bright things, Goodwin retrieves the anecdotes and details that reveal the Ottomans in war and peace. The odder the better. The Germans used to call Turks "bag-people," for instance, and one Venetian consul in Smyrna lived to be 115, a fortress in the Danube had 6,531 shovels, and a French doctor cured the last Koprulu pasha of an obsession that he had a fly on his nose. Christians from many countries converted to Islam. Known as "renegades" in the language of the day, these prototype fellow travelers brought a range of special skills to the Ottomans. And so on, nugget upon nugget, piled on with exhaustive energy.

Islam still holds its own, but Turks have replaced most of their heritage with European values and codes. The Age of Enlightenment decided that in that span of history the West would master those who might have mastered them. How was it possible for non-Westerners to live through that burgeoning of science and reason, but not to draw the obvious conclusion—that science and reason are indispensable to civilization—until too late? Somewhere in this treasure chest of material lies the answer, but neither Goodwin nor anyone else can quite put a hand on it. **NR**

Genocide on Main Street

ELLIOTT ABRAMS

The Holocaust in American Life, by Peter Novick (Houghton Mifflin, 320 pp., $27)

THE murders and deportations in Kosovo have brought with them memories of the 1930s, when Europe's Jews were subjected to the genocidal attack we now call the Holocaust. Commentators on the Balkan crisis say we must "learn the lesson of the Holocaust"; an advertisement placed by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith asks us to "respond as you wish the world had responded last time."

Mr. Abrams is president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center and author of *Faith or Fear: How Jews Can Survive in a Christian America*.

Such analogies are familiar nowadays—no matter how dissimilar events in Kosovo may be from the actual Holocaust. Ironically, this impulse to find new Holocausts here and there reflects the all-but-universal recognition of the uniqueness of the Holocaust—the same recognition that leads us, more appropriately, to record its horrors and to offer reverent tributes to those who suffered from them, in history books, films, and the like. But as Peter Novick reminds us in *The Holocaust in American Life*, despite the prominence that the Holocaust has today attained, our acute consciousness of it is a fairly recent development.

In the immediate post-war years, the Holocaust was rarely spoken of—by Christians or Jews. When *The Diary of Anne Frank* was produced as a play in 1955 and as a film in 1959, it was lauded

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The Eichmann trial was the first time the Holocaust was presented to Americans as an entity in its own right.

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for emphasizing universalist themes rather than the Jewishness of Nazi victims. Nathan Glazer's classic work *American Judaism*, published in 1957, contained no index entry for "Holocaust."

All this began to change in 1961, Novick writes, with the trial of Adolf Eichmann. The trial was "the first time what we now call the Holocaust was presented to the American public as an entity in its own right, distinct from Nazi barbarism in general." Furthermore, in the United States, "the word 'Holocaust' first became firmly attached to the murder of European Jewry as a result of the trial." This was an important change. The most commonly used English-language version of the Torah at the time, that edited by Rabbi Joseph Hertz in 1936, employs the term to mean any mass killing. In discussing animal sacrifice, for example, Hertz refers to "the holocausts King Solomon slaughtered when he dedicated the Temple." Such usage would be unthinkable today.

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Another turning point came with the 1967 and 1973 wars between Israel and its Arab neighbors, which made many Jews wonder if "it could happen again." In a crucial change of strategy, many Jewish organizations concluded that "Americans could be made more sympathetic to Israel, or to American Jews, through awareness of the Holocaust, [and so] efforts had to be made to spread that awareness throughout American society." These efforts were largely successful—the 1978 television miniseries *Holocaust* brought the subject into millions of American homes, and literally thousands of courses on the Holocaust were introduced in American colleges. Finally, in 1993 the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum opened on the Mall in Washington.

What impact have these measures had? Says Novick, not much. For most Americans, deploring the Holocaust is little more than a ritualistic gesture, albeit well meant, toward Jews who ask them to do so. To Novick, this is unsurprising: The Holocaust occurred not here but in Europe, and its perpetrators were not Americans. Nor does Novick (who is Jewish) believe that Americans do or should feel guilty for their conduct during those years: "The notion that the rescue of threatened foreign civilian populations was an obligation of a country involved in total war didn't occur to Americans during World War II or in its aftermath." Moreover, he is at pains to discredit critics of American action (or inaction), arguing that during the war there was little that could in reality have been done. Here he sometimes ties himself in knots: For example, he argues that Americans should not feel any guilt about the failure to rescue more European Jews, then absolves the Roosevelt administration of its failures—on grounds that popular anti-Semitism prevented admitting refugees.

For Jews, the Holocaust is a far more salient matter. Recently, the major Jewish organizations have often advocated Holocaust studies as a means of developing or deepening Jewish identity at a time when intermarriage and assimilation appear to threaten the Jewish future in America.

Novick's book includes a good discussion of why this "sacralization" of the Holocaust undercuts so much of traditional Jewish theology. "Where once it was said that the life of Jews would be a 'light unto the nations'—the bearer of universal lessons—now it is the . . . death of Jews that is said to carry universal lessons." Moreover, as he does not point out, using the Holocaust to promote Jewish identity simply isn't working. The years during which the Holocaust has been at the center of American Jewish life (say, 1975 to now) are those in which intermarriage rates have risen fastest and the identity/assimilation/survival crisis has seemed to grow most rapidly.

What of the future? Novick rightly notes that the Holocaust has been institutionalized—in the museum on the Mall, similar museums in New York and Los Angeles, memorials in many cities, legislative mandates to teach it, and endowed chairs and programs. As Novick says, "there are by now thousands of full-time Holocaust professionals dedicated to keeping its memory alive." If, as he reports, all this has had little apparent impact on non-Jewish Americans, it may prove dangerous for Jews by making this horrendous period of Jewish suffering more familiar to them than their own religion. In fact, the prospect is disquieting: professionals churning out Holocaust materials for a diminishing Jewish population that learns more and more about the period from 1933 to 1945 and knows less and less about the 4,000 years of Judaism that preceded it.

Sadly, Novick's politics mar his book. His lengthy and unpersuasive discourses about the Cold War (which "led to marginalizing the Holocaust" because the Germans were now our allies) are reminiscent of CNN's notorious series. In fact, Holocaust consciousness grew rapidly during the 1980s, the dreaded Reagan years when "Cold War ideology" haunted the land. Otherwise, *The Holocaust in American Life* is a useful history and an often acute analysis of a major theme in American Jewish life. **NR**

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Social X-Ray

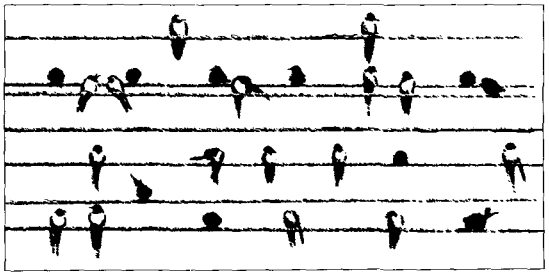
RICHARD BROOKHISER

Turn of the Century, by Kurt Andersen (Random House, 659 pp., $24.95)

WHEN I go to the beach, I usually take a novel by Anthony Trollope. It is a painless way to absorb social history, and if there are 50 pages still unread by the time I come home, who cares? Once, as I looked past the book to my toes and the little slipping waves, I realized that a strange thing had occurred—I was actually interested in a character.

This year I took Kurt Andersen's *Turn of the Century* to the beach, and had a similar experience—a long, pleasant tickling, with a few moments of engagement, that soon subsided. A Trollope reference on page 642 (the heroine is reading *The Way We Live Now*) iced the parallel.

The hero and heroine are George Mactier and Lizzie Zimbalist, husband and wife, who live in Manhattan, the fading *grande dame* of infotainment in America. George is a journalist turned producer of TV shows, which are thought of as edgy. He is smart without knowing anything in particular and skillful without having any talent; he hails from a flyover state (Minnesota) thought to be dull, though that is not a sufficient explanation for his own dullness. The one arresting thing about him is that he lost a hand reporting in Nicaragua. Lizzie, who is more likable, runs a software company in Silicon Alley, which attracts the interest of a Rupert Murdoch figure, who also happens to be broadcasting George's hit show. In the course of the year 2000 their professional and personal lives go through a variety of ups and downs no more improbable than anything else that happens in New York, Las Vegas, Redmond, Wash., or the other cultural meridian points the book touches.



Andersen's tale has several virtues. He is a good mimic, and he captures the speech and thought patterns of computer geeks, stock traders, Minnesotans, and MAWs (MAW=Model, Actress, Whatever). In his own frictionless voice he delivers some tidy observation on almost every page. Several of his comic lesser characters are wonderful, none more so than Timothy Featherstone, a media executive of nebulous provenance and function. When the favorite dog (called Peacemaker) of the starlet of George's show dies, Timothy consoles and inspires her. "Angela? *Use* it. *Use* the grief. . . . It'll be good for the work—and you know what else, Angela? It's what Peacemaker would want you to do." The last 50 pages is a brisk extended set piece about a plot against Bill Gates, which, however, leaves George and Lizzie in the shade, as if Andersen had (not surprisingly) lost interest in them.

There is a serious thought pulsing in the ether, waiting to be brought to earth. Neither George nor Lizzie is a creator, and George is not an owner of the means of production. They are switches in the great system of information, and they suspect that what it and they do is worthless. Their intuition never leads to knowledge or action, only to depression and funk. The problem first becomes evident in a brutal scene in Las Vegas in which a drunken and exhausted George is approached by a MAW on the make who does sexy things with his maimed arm, and offers to do much more. "*Exceptionally* sick," George thinks. When told that he lost his hand in Nicaragua, she says, "That's in Florida, right?" which makes George think, "Exceptionally sick and exceptionally stupid." At the second half of that second thought, the reader realizes that George's first reaction was not to the entire situation, including his own dazed complicity in it, but only to the pathetic, perverted girl: Only she could be the referent of "stupid." George knows that he is playing in a little comedy of damnation, and he does not let things go any further. But he does not see that the hell tolls for him too, for he is too much a part of his own rotted world. So, one suspects, is Andersen—formerly of *Time*, *Spy*, *New York*, and now of *The New Yorker*.

This is why Andersen pulls almost all of his punches. No one really gets slapped in this book, except for the Murdoch figure, who is filmed masturbating by the camera in his PC. Murdoch is not exactly a tough target, and Andersen is too vapory to call him by that name ("Rupert Murdoch" is mentioned in passing, as another man). The flip side of the pseudo-disgust is pseudo-sentiment, curdling around George and Lizzie's marriage and children. Not all sentiment is sentimentality, one of the characters says at one point. But it is when it's bolted on in the pro forma way that Andersen does it.

George and Lizzie are switches in the great system of information, and they suspect that what they do is worthless.

The next-to-last chapter is a New Year's Eve dinner as 2000 turns to 2001. George has a new project; Lizzie has sold her company, not for the $30 million that briefly shimmered before her, but for a modest and homey $1 million. The view from the upper reaches of the greasy pole is *gemütlich* and cozy. The last chapter offers a dark twist, as the plane George is riding in is about to crash (though maybe it won't). Like his heroes, Andersen wants to have it every which way. So, dear Reader, what was behind the door—the Lady, or the Tiger? Give me a break.

The acknowledgments, thick with media names (". . . Tom Brokaw, Holly Brubach . . ."), extend the theme of the book, and should not be missed. **NR**

Mr. Brookhiser, an NR senior editor, is author most recently of *Alexander Hamilton, American*.

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■ MANNERS ■

Ready, Set, Relax!

DAVID KLINGHOFFER

AT 7 P.M., Memorial Day 1999, my friend Allan and I are sitting on an uncharacteristically empty beach in Amagansett, N.Y., a small bottle of MacCallan scotch between us. Allan is recounting an off-color joke about Cindy Crawford.

The joke: So it seems this guy is marooned on a desert island with Miss Crawford. It's just the two of them, and naturally, they become intimate. One day he tells her that if she wants to truly satisfy him she must, just this once . . . pretend to be his buddy Dave. She agrees. He gives her a man's shirt. She puts it on. He gives her a man's hat. She puts that on. He gives her a combined fake mustache, Groucho nose, and glasses. She puts them on too. Now he's ready. So the guy exclaims to Cindy Crawford: "Hey, Dave, you'll never guess what! I'm on a desert island with *Cindy Crawford* and I'm [engaging in sexual congress with] her every night!"

Understand this joke and you'll understand why, from Memorial Day to Labor Day, legions of Manhattanites cram into cars, buses, trains, planes, even helicopters to get to the Hamptons—Southampton or Wainscott, East Hampton or Amagansett—a stretch of semi-rural, semi-suburban resort along the East End of Long Island. Once they've arrived, the jolly weekenders cram into rented houses or sublet condominiums. A typical "share" home (circa $25,000 for the summer season) might warehouse 16 youngish men and women per weekend in a rotating format. If you've got real money you might rent a whole house (up to $500,000) for yourself, or even buy one (no price too high). On a given weekend, half the pilgrims belong, like me, to the former, vagabond class.

Of course, such distinctions are relative. A few day-tripping Hispanic folks appear on Main Beach, East Hampton, each afternoon and wade into the surf fully clothed (the custom in Guatemala?). Otherwise, visitors to the Hamptons are all white and upper middle class or above. Famously liberal New Yorkers still prefer their leisure activities—beaches, movie theaters, coffee places—to be racially segregated. Yet despite the narrow socioeconomic spectrum, the Hamptons are all about class struggle, about the weekend holiday as a marker of social and economic achievement. You don't really come here to relax; you come here to play your marker against everyone else's. It's vacationing as a competitive sport.

There are various levels of competition. Events include:

Getting There. The 100 miles from Manhattan can be traversed in 2 hours and 15 minutes, but on weekends there is almost always ferocious traffic. The trip can take 5 hours. The objective, then, becomes trying to figure out when all the other vacationers *think* that everyone else will be on the road. At that hour, the roads are empty. "Everyone's psyching each other out," says a neighbor of mine at the condo block in Amagansett where I rent. "It's very subtle."

Sleeping. Also subtle. What's important is not merely how expensive your digs are but how long you've been coming here. There's serious competition in this category. One of the first Hamptonites was a Montauk Indian called

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In the Hamptons on Memorial Day, vacationing is a competitive sport.

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Jeorgkee who fished in and gave his name to Georgica Pond, where today the richest of the rich dwell. In 1648 Pilgrims bought the area from the Montauks. In this century Polish and Irish potato farmers were overshadowed by a blue-blooded summer colony of du Ponts, Bouviers, and Auchinclosses. The latter were in turn displaced by New Yorkers who had actually earned

Mr. Klinghoffer, an NR senior editor, is author of *The Lord Will Gather Me In: My Journey to Jewish Orthodoxy.*

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their money. Each generation of vacationers and residents has felt entitled to despise those who came after.

In conversation the key word to master is "ruined." As in, "All the restaurants have been ruined. We never go out anymore," which my Amagansett neighbor says with a sigh. It is a cardinal principle that any change that has occurred in the Hamptons since you first came here constitutes ruination.

Sleeping With. Not subtle at all. The thuggish, fraternity-type guys who patrol the pavement of East Hampton's main street on Saturday night looking to hook up with the barely clad beach girls are balanced by marriage-minded Allan and me, earnestly if vaguely hoping to meet Miss Right. Before going out for the evening, we find ourselves primping in front of the mirror for longer than, on reflection, seems appropriate. We meet no one and lose this round to the thugs.

Eating. The Hamptons dynamic demands that all competitors squeeze into a handful of establishments not necessarily offering good food or a pleasant atmosphere. The line just for coffee at the Farmers Market in Amagansett is almost interminable but seems longer with everyone complaining about how long the line is.

Being Seen. There exists, of course, a demimonde of ultra-fancy parties for deluxe celebrities, chronicled in almost pornographic detail by the New York newspapers. Like any sport, the Hamptons scene has its fans, who read about it devotedly in fan publications, such as the *Times* or the *Observer*. You sigh over the rumor on the *Post*'s "Page Six" that rap rich guy (how else to describe him?) Sean "Puffy" Combs plans a blowout that night at his East Hampton compound.

For everybody else, it's not so much being seen that counts. You can't help *that*. Except for the beaches at 7 P.M. (unaccountably, since it's the loveliest time of the day), everywhere is crowded at most times. What's essential is being *heard*. At places like the Farmers Market, when not brusquely commanding the service personnel, patrons talk with their companions as loudly as possible, or allow their children to scream as loudly as possible. If your voice can be heard by everybody within 30 feet, you win. Thus one quiet late afternoon on the beach, this time at Louse Point, Allan and I are suddenly invaded by six vacationers toasting themselves with champagne at maximum volume. One shouts: "I paid $15,000 for this view. I'm gonna get my money's worth!" He won.

But what if you choose not to play? Not so simple. If you stay in Manhattan, you're still playing—but, especially on Memorial Day, you've lost the first round of competition. Tuesday morning after a three-day weekend your colleagues at work will ask what you did for the holiday. "Oh," you say casually, "I just stayed in town, you know, kicked back." Wince!

If you make the trip but tell yourself you don't care about any of this anyway—as I do on the Long Island Expressway every time I go—you're also fooling yourself. At the Farmers Market, Allan and I see a renowned musician and his wife, and immediately we are entered in the Sleeping With competition, or at least passionately spectating. We notice that the lady, despite her chic husband, is a dormouse. Yes! He may be rich and famous, but look at that wife! *She's* no Cindy Crawford. **NR**

■ FILM ■

Treacle and Tea

JOHN SIMON

SOME cheeses are meant to be eaten rotten, others thrown away when rot sets in. The cheesy Rotting—sorry—***Notting Hill*** is of the latter variety. A supposed romantic comedy, it is stale, soggy, and, if it weren't so irritating, soporific. It concerns the glamorous Hollywood superstar Anna Scott, who wanders into William Thacker's travel bookshop in London's multiculturally chic Notting Hill section. When the overeager William spills orange juice all over Anna's blouse, she improbably agrees to come to his flat across the street to repair the damage.

Forthwith, the rusty wheels of cutesy romance creak into motion, and now it is only a matter of how long the screenwriter, Richard Curtis, and the director, Roger Mitchell, can postpone the preposterous but predictable ending with every well-worn delaying tactic.

Absurdity would be forgivable if it were charming, witty, or sexy, but all three qualities are in short supply here. The initially icy Anna thaws out fairly quickly and becomes open to William's timid, gangly courtship. You can tell that this is an English film by the way the passive male dithers, blithers, and gets muddled, while the aggressor female makes all the advances till the penultimate moment. Unfortunately, reverse clichés are still clichés.

Hugh Grant's William, with the virginally blue eyes and carefully careless-seeming coiffure—two shocks of brown hair framing his ingenuous countenance, the rest descending, neatly terraced, onto his nape—is all adorable awkwardnesses, chief among them a much-repeated long pause followed by a sheepish "Right!" Julia Roberts's Anna, overcome by so much masculine sweetness, is the first to kiss, the first to make a date, the first to invite upstairs to her suite at the Ritz—though not in years have we had a bedroom scene with so little eroticism, never mind bed in it. Waking up together, the lovers discuss the uninterestingness of breasts, with William allowed one brief peek under Anna's decorously protective sheet, and the rest of us not even that.

■

Its absurdity would be forgivable if *Notting Hill* were charming, witty, or sexy. It isn't.

■

There are more pauses in Nothing—sorry—*Notting Hill* than in a Pinter play, but only because the characters are bumblers, particularly William, whose tongue seems to be into advanced bondage, although he can deliver second-rate witticisms quite trippingly. He is saddled with a randy and foul-mouthed Welshman, Spike, for a flatmate, amusingly played by Rhys Ifans. Anna reminds us how hard her life as a star earning 15 mil. per picture is, which, of course, breaks the hearts of us making 14 or less. There are standard comic friends and relatives for William, including a punker sister

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and a happily married couple whose ardor isn't dampened by a fall that confines the wife to a wheelchair.

There are a few funny scenes, though, notably one in which William, to get to see Anna, must pretend to be an interviewing journalist from *Horse and Hound* and is forced into a bizarre line of questioning. The love story, however, which ends with William proposing to Anna during a huge press conference at the Savoy, is rather like a long bath in a tub of alternately hot and cold pineapple juice.

The mistimings and misconstruings and assorted contretemps that roughen the course of true love culminate in a scene where stellar Anna seeks out pining William in his shop and utters the soon-to-be-classic line, "I'm also just a girl standing in front of a boy asking him to love her." Not being able to stand yet another potential heartbreak, he sadly sends her away. That the still unwrapped present she brought him is the original of his favorite Chagall painting may contribute to his changing his mind.

At a movie whose every other moment makes you wince, and whose rock-music soundtrack makes you groan in between, you have to divert yourself in other ways. So you notice that Grant has tolerable upper teeth but, in best British dental tradition, disastrous lower ones, and start admiring his skill at smiling mostly with his upper lip. Or you marvel at how Miss Roberts's visage—despite excess nose, mouth, and ears—does not fail to captivate. But whenever you are diverted back to the film at hand, you merely feel like giving it the finger.

■ ***Tea with Mussolini*** is based on a couple of paragraphs of the Italian director Franco Zeffirelli's autobiography, in whose very foreword we read, "No one tells the full truth about themselves." The screenplay by Zeffirelli and John Mortimer is indeed highly fictionalized (mostly by Mortimer, I guess, as Mr. Z. says in the same foreword, "I am a raconteur rather than a writer"), and its content of truth seems about as full as a hunter's moon.

It concerns a gaggle of British ladies of a certain age leading a charmed life in Florence in the '30s, pursuing hobbies if affluent, and working at respectable jobs if not. They are known to the locals as the *scorpioni* for the sting of their meddling superiority. Their leader is Lady Hester (Maggie Smith), widow of a former British ambassador and great fan of Mussolini's because of a once-shared tea. Arabella (Judi Dench) officiously protects frescoes and fancies herself a singer. A butch American archeologist, Georgie (Lily Tomlin), is a showy lesbian. Most level-headed is Mary (Joan Plowright), a secretary and translator, who becomes de facto foster mother to little Luca, her boss's bastard and Zeffirelli's alter ego.

There are also other British ladies, but all are eclipsed by a flamboyant American, Elsa, a lucratively widowed ex-Ziegfeld girl (Cher), who generously and anonymously shares her wealth with the rest until, being Jewish, she lands in mortal danger. Though Mary does admirably by Luca, his proto-fascist father packs him off to Austria to learn German, as the Duce and the Führer form an axis, and war is about to break out. By the time Luca returns as a young man, the scorpions have been interned at picturesquely medieval San Gimignano, and it will be up to Luca and the partisans he valiantly joins to rescue them.

That is about as much as you need to know, though there are many incidents of mingled charm, sentimentality, and even suspense, laced with dollops of wit. Frankly, I didn't expect old Zeffirelli to show so much verve and viability at this late stage, yet he does better here than in his bejeweled prime. Credit also his shrewdly picked collaborators, notably the droll Mortimer and the great cinematographer David Watkin. Watkin keeps the exteriors fresco-like in tone (one sunset on the Arno is pure Giotto, had Giotto painted sunsets) and his interiors bursting with life. There is also intelligently spare background music, and Florence itself is enough to melt the eye.

All the smartly cast actresses perform yeoman's work, only Lily Tomlin may have been allowed a few balls too many. The two Lucas, child and youth, are equally adorable, Mr. Z. being especially fastidious about choosing his alter egos. But it is Joan Plowright who walks away with top honors in a performance that blends warmth and pawkiness, sparkle and gravitas, heart and backbone. So perfect a being could hardly exist, but

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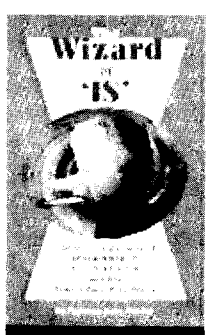

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the actress makes her grittily alive without allowing the occasionally circumambient sentimentality to creep into her work. Yet even the film's tear-jerking is executed with a certain restraint; there is not that much tea in *Tea with Mussolini*, but the sympathy is ubiquitous. **NR**

■ ART ■

America on Canvas

JAMES GARDNER

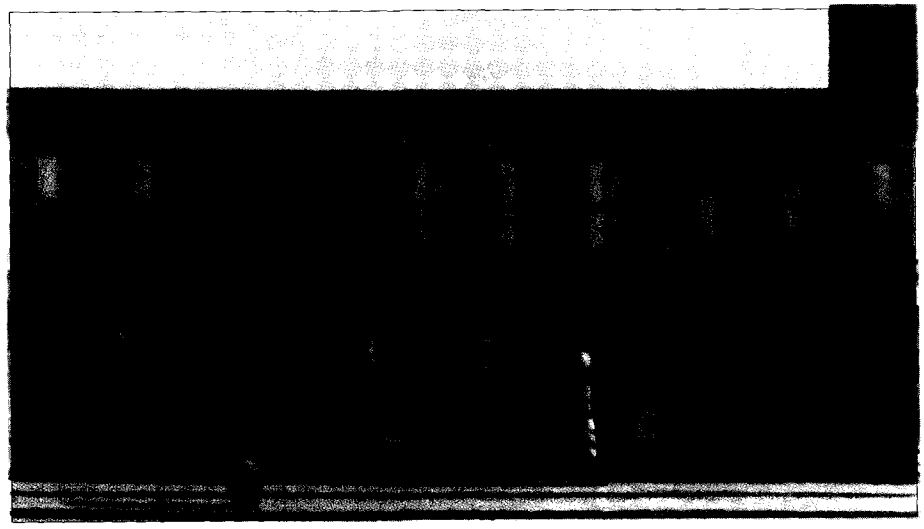
DECADES hence, if the present tide of American affluence should recede, future generations may look back on the latest retrospective offering at New York's Whitney Museum as the very summit of our arrogance. The triumphalist spirit of "The American Century: Art and Culture 1900–1950" (the latter 50 years go on display in September) has more to do with the soaring Dow, the triumphs of our military, and the steady progress of the American democratic model than with what a few of our painters, sculptors, and photographers were doing three generations back. The last time anyone saw an exhibition as unabashedly nationalistic as this, it was the "New American Painting" show that toured Europe in 1958–59, and the art world still won't shut up about it. Intended to introduce Europeans to the best examples of Abstract Expressionism, it has recently been "exposed," through the paranoid industry of certain art historians, as having been a CIA plot all along, the high-cultural façade of the military-industrial complex.

And yet, at least for the time being, there is something infectiously celebratory about the scene at the Whitney. Its abundant offerings from every province of visual culture, including film, architecture, and design, are the visual equivalent of a bacchanal. And the causes of celebration are manifold. To begin with, it is a triumph of curatorship. The number of excellent and representative works assembled in one space, over 700 of them, is staggering. All of them, without exception, are the very finest of their kind. And though the Whitney is by nature an ugly-looking thing, both inside and out, it has never appeared quite as spiffy as this. Through lighting and manipulation of space, the fourth floor has become the very model of effective and evocative display. In accord with the millennial fever of the moment, everything is ultra-high-tech, from the digitized "acoustaguides" to the Intel-sponsored computer banks on each floor. So what if the latter are mainly for display? They still look great.

Unlike the artists to be included in the second half of the exhibition, many, if not most, of these earlier ones are not widely known. Certainly you will find here the usual icons: Grant Wood's eternally constipated couple in *American Gothic* (1930), Hopper's *Early Sunday Morning* (1930), Ben Shahn's *Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti* (1930–32). But most of the art on display comes as a very pleasant surprise. For much of the period under consideration America was still largely an artistic backwater. Even the geniuses of our early avant-garde—Stieglitz, Steichen, and O'Keefe—were the followers of imported fashions. And yet, for all that, how talented we were! If there is one quality that emerges from all the clashing styles and vocabularies of our earlier art, it is a sense of earnest and yet inspired diligence. This is different, surely, from the high seriousness of the Europeans that, a generation later, would produce the mirthless intensity of Rothko and Rheinhardt, which begins to appear only toward the end of the present exhibition. The very status of being a follower imbued much of our art with a hokey vanguardism. But it also liberated us from the folly of supposing that the future of art history depended on the outcome of every last artifact we made.

We allowed ourselves, therefore, to be obvious and bombastic and petulant by turns, but the art that this produced had, as the Whiney exhibition reveals, the highest artistic virtue: It was alive. From a theoretical point of view, there is little of importance in George Bellow's *Pennsylvania Station Excavation* (1909) or in the vaporous chromatic mists of Charles Demuth's *Poppies* (1915) or in Gerald Murphy's unexpectedly brilliant *Watch* (1924–25), beyond the irrepressible desire to create something of beauty. To this end, our artists were willing to try anything at all.

The number of styles paraded through this exhibition is dizzying: Ashcan, American Scene, Social Realist, Synchromist, Surrealist, Geometric Abstraction, Gestural Abstraction. The curator Barbara Haskell, together with the museum's new director, Maxwell Anderson, and David Ross, the man he replaced, has embraced this variety with open arms, and so, doubtless will the public. There is little sense of the subordination of one style to another or of popular art to high art, or even of cinema to painting and sculpture. But then, a bacchanal is not a ballet, and as long as its bacchants are in ecstasy, they probably couldn't care less. **NR**



Edward Hopper, Early Sunday Morning *(1930)*

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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

More Yet on Alger Hiss

NEW YORK, MAY 14

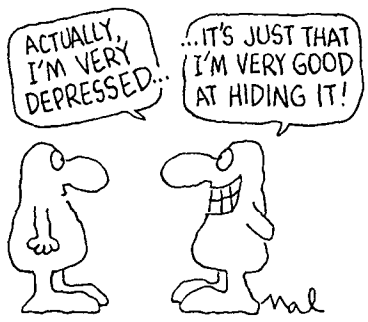
THERE was hubbub on Thursday when Judge Peter Leisure of the U.S. District Court acceded to petitions by a consortium of scholars and journalists (I was one) asking for the release of the grand-jury testimony in the great Hiss–Chambers case of 1948–50. What was the motive of the petitioners? Historical curiosity, primarily. The people who maintain that Hiss was really innocent are a dwindling band of personal sentimentalists and ideological die-hards. The son of Alger Hiss is a journalist who has written a book about his family life in which he simply proceeds on the assumption that his father was innocent—which is the best way to proceed. If one assumes the burden of *arguing* the innocence of Hiss, the burden is overwhelming. On the ideological front, the editors of *The Nation* are most prominently associated with the Hiss-is-innocent school of history, which can be likened to the school of history that says the Nazis didn't really kill all that many Jews.

But the action of the court bespeaks continuing curiosity about the case. One lawyer/historian argued that the judge opens up the possibility, whether intentionally or not, that the minutes should be disclosed leading to the trial of Aaron Burr for treason (he was found not guilty). There is persistent curiosity about historical trials, whether because they affected history or because they caught the public interest. Alfred Dreyfus was convicted of treason in 1894 and in a few years, his case having torn France apart, was conclusively exonerated on a showing that his accusers and the tribunal were moved by anti-Semitism. But if a great-grandson were tomorrow to present a publisher with a previously unread journal by one of the accusers or judges, it would be snapped up for publication. At about the time the Hiss trial was held, a professor at my college was writing an essay to the effect that Socrates was really guilty as charged.

Several questions were raised in Judge Leisure's 60-page opinion. One of them, which rated most of the publicity, was the question: Ought grand-jury testimony to be held confidential for all time, or are there reasonable limits to be placed on the confidentiality? As recently as during the Starr proceedings against Bill Clinton the question was raised: Does the rule of confidentiality protect a client even after his death? The point then was to question a lawyer about information given to him by the late James McDougal. The ruling came down that the bond survives the death of the client, so we will never know what he told his own lawyer, and in this instance it is likely that nobody will much care.

A second point raised in the Hiss case has to do with the behavior of Richard Nixon, at that time an upwardly mobile congressman and de facto, if not de jure, the most prominent prosecutor on the scene. But it is critically important, in judicial procedure, to stress the difference between 1) Nixon a leading expert on the Hiss–Chambers case in virtue of his role as a member of the House Committee on Un-American Activities that had conducted the investigation, and 2) Nixon as simply one of several witnesses appearing before the grand jury. It is hard exactly to figure out what Judge Leisure was thinking about when he wondered out loud in his opinion whether Nixon had trespassed over the line that separates the legislative and the judicial, unbalancing the separation of powers. To reach for a hypothetical offense, incredible though it would be, suppose that Nixon had threatened the jury with an investigation by the House Committee on Un-American Activities if it failed to bring in an indictment against Hiss. But even if such an inconceivability were turned up, you would be left with only one more delinquency to add to the anti-Nixon ledger. That would make for a historical footnote, but its bearing on the guilt or innocence of Hiss would be nugatory. To establish that Nixon was guilty of an impropriety is not the equivalent of establishing that Hiss was innocent.

Third, there is the matter of the evidence available to the grand jury when it ruled that Hiss should stand trial. The jurors knew a great deal, but not nearly as much as subsequent scholarship revealed. Professor Allen Weinstein, in his book *Perjury*, and Sam Tanenhaus, in his biography, *Whittaker Chambers*, considerably extended the case against Hiss by original scholarship. The point being that whatever now transpires that the grand jurors heard before voting to indict Hiss, it cannot be persuasively argued that if they had known more they'd have acted differently.



There is a final argument in favor of the release of the documents. It is that, desperate for sustaining evidence, the Hiss people could point darkly at a still-hidden trove in which the truth lay lonely and unobserved. Once again, it is hard to come up with a hypothetically exonerative document—but as long as *anything* remains hidden, the lost tribes of Hiss have a little peyote to chew on. Judge Leisure greatly depleted this reserve.

Apologize to China?

NEW YORK, MAY 11

THE big mistake was to *apologize*. It's okay to *regret* killing three Chinese in the embassy in Belgrade but what is one apologizing for? It is as nonsensical as the words one hears on an airplane. "We apologize for the late arrival." That gives off the sound of the pilot having come in late, or getting lost. You do not "apologize" if fog or dispatch instructions made you late, and you do not apologize if a bomber unintentionally bombed a foreign embassy.

But then there was obviously something more afoot than the death of three Chinese. The Chinese government, it quickly transpired, was if not directly behind the anti-U.S. riot a) tolerant of it, and b) pleased by it. We are talking about hundreds of thousands of people whose parents lived through the Cultural Revolution and may have been among those many thousands who told marauding Red Guards that the neighbor over there had been seen listening to a foreign broadcast, leading to public execution. The idea that the wretched Chinese, 35 million of whose progenitors paid for China's love affair with Maoism, are shocked by the accidental death of three journalists causes one to wonder. During the 1930s Henry Wallace, as secretary of agriculture, ordered the slaughtering of pigs, in an effort to maintain the price of hog. There was a great uproar. Wallace countered with the only witticism ever attributed to him. "You'd think," he said about his critics, "they were all related."

We couldn't, one supposes, really expect the president of the United States or even

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the secretary of state to say it, but someone "close to the White House" might usefully have been quoted . . . "Under strict understanding of anonymity, the source said that the unofficial government line is: What is Peking complaining about? If the Chinese are against random killing, they should be exercised about what Milosevic is doing. A second White House source said it would be helpful to the cause of human freedom if Peking organized a volunteer force to go to Kosovo to fight the aggressor. 'They could call it the Belgrade Memorial Expeditionary Force,' he said."

We learn that the Chinese government is in fact continuing what the Cultural Revolution types did routinely. It was to picture the United States as an imperialist power insensitive to the rights of other people and prisoner to the capitalist-imperialist imperative to commit aggression. The *Wall Street Journal* reports that the identical thing is going on in Russia, with readers and viewers enjoined by state media to believe that NATO, led by the United States, is engaged in crude imperialism. Counter-facts, of course, have not the faintest possibility of prevailing against the official line.

But here is a true challenge to U.S. diplomacy. We have been courting the Chinese throughout the tenure of Mr. Clinton. If it were youth acting on their own impulses we could ignore the event—youth were born to be ignored, when they give way to political impulses.

But this is not what is going on. We have not heard official Peking raise its authoritative hand and say, "Stop! Comrades, the United States government has expressed its regret and will pay damages to the aggrieved families." We have to deduce that the Peking government thinks it productive to antagonize the United States. Which requires us to answer the question: Why?

The protest might have been generated by some kind of nationalist scorn for defective Western intelligence. The CIA was using old maps, and should have been using up-to-date maps which marked with a big X the Chinese embassy. But then one thinks back on the line used by NATIONAL REVIEW 40 years ago: "The attempted assassination of Sukarno had all the appearances of a CIA operation. Everyone in the room was killed but Sukarno."

In fact, any attempt at such finely calibrated bombing as to guarantee immunity is surrealistic. Wars inevitably swoop down on people who are not engaged in them, and while true regret can be expressed at incidental casualties, it is unreal to expect either that there will be none such in the future, or that a heavy obligation in conscience rests with the offender.

The NATO alliance, led by Mr. Clinton, has a great deal to be achingly remorseful about, but none of it has to do with the object of concern of rioting young Chinese.

John McCain, Alternative Candidate?

NEW YORK, MAY 7

JOHN MCCAIN was introduced to the 40 men and women at dinner by the host's recalling that as a prisoner of war in Hanoi, McCain was singularly conspicuous, given that his father was commander in chief of the Pacific fleet. It was on one of his father's operations that McCain was shot down, destined for five years of terrible maltreatment, mostly in solitary confinement. By reason of tight diplomatic maneuvering the opportunity suddenly presented itself: He would be freed! John McCain sent up word declining favorable attention. He would remain in his solitary cell until all his fellow prisoners, more than one year later, were let go. He is now, of course, Sen. John McCain from Arizona, and he is running for president.

As expected, he began with talk of Kosovo. His position is that our engagement there was thoughtlessly contracted but that we must now press on to victory. If we do not, we will be severely tested in the years to come by aggressor nations that will have lost any respect for the alleged superpower.

But since manifestly we have lost the war, one guest asked, shouldn't we devote our efforts to recovering our prestige after assimilating that loss? No, the presidential candidate said. Sixty or seventy thousand troops could reverse the situation in Kosovo. "It is wrong to think of Milosevic as invincible." Why is Congress so ambiguous on the military operation? Because there are congressmen who simply don't trust the leadership. And there are even some congressmen who loathe Clinton so much they would risk the public interest to damage his prospects.

Speaking of prospects, what are McCain's? Well, Iowa is tough—the caucus system. And he intends to say unpopular things in Iowa, for instance that the government subsidy of ethanol is an extravagant disgrace. What about New Hampshire? Well, to quote his Arizona friend, the late Morris Udall, one New Hampshire resident asked by a reporter whether he would vote for Udall answered, "I don't know. I've only met him twice."

That's how it is in New Hampshire but, said the senator, there are 40,000 GOP voters there and McCain 2000 has 4,000 volunteers working for him under the direction of most-popular New Hampshire Republican Warren Rudman.

What about the domestic scene?

The problems are serious and drum home the relative demoralization of younger Americans, many of whom have not faced serious challenges. The pornography on the Internet is a chilling question, betokening a kind of moral listlessness that isn't healthy.

How much of all of this will get flushed out in the primaries?

There will be vigorous discussion.

How will he conduct his strategy?

Under no circumstances will he engage in a negative campaign. He knows George W. well and thinks he has done a fine job as governor, but he simply does not have the experience that McCain has. His strategy is to achieve by this fall the position of the alternative candidate, in effect a race reduced to Bush *vs.* McCain. The other GOP candidates? Fine men, he knows them all. Pat Buchanan is probably the GOP contender with whom he'd be happiest to spend an evening. But no, not Buchanan for president, given his positions on international commitments and international trade. The Democrats? Bradley is developing into a contender, but suffers from two disadvantages. He is dull, and he doesn't have a natural faculty for discerning which is really the most important problem on the horizon.

On the tactical front in Kosovo, we continue to suffer from Clinton's commitment to proceed through the entire operation without the use of ground troops. "The first thing you are taught at the Naval Academy is that you never tell the enemy what you will or won't do." The senator explained that, with the assurance that there wouldn't be a ground invasion, Milosevic was able to deploy his tanks individually, rather than grouping them together to guard against an invasion.

If we proceed with ground troops there will be deaths, of course?

Yes. The heaviest responsibility one exercises is the prospect of death for soldiers one sends out. "But to fail to run that risk when it is deemed necessary for the public interest is to shirk my own duty."

He concluded: He would make one promise to those he was addressing at dinner. "I will never embarrass you." Or was that, I *would* never embarrass you?

Sen. McCain didn't tell another of Mo Udall's lines, which was, "I've come in second in every primary, so I expect to be nominated on the second ballot."

—UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

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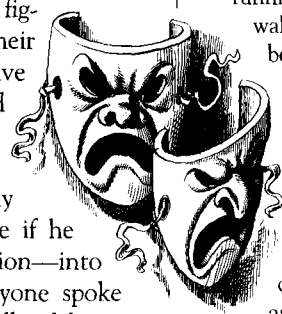
■ THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER ■

FLORENCE KING

I COMPILED an interesting list the other day: All the men in my life were subject to the military draft. That figures for a woman my age, but what is interesting are the memories and reflections my listmaking triggered.

Now that Americans are incapable of putting up with anything and think nothing of launching multimillion-dollar lawsuits over spilled coffee, it is almost eerie to recall my generation's matter-of-fact acceptance of the draft. Lives were built around it, cheerfully and optimistically for the most part. Boys jotted figures to see how much of their military pay they could save and how much they could earn afterward if the service taught them a good trade; girls automatically factored two years—three if he enlisted to avoid induction—into wedding plans; and everyone spoke knowledgeably and hopefully of the most desirable postings: Montauk Point Lighthouse meant weekends in New York for lucky Coast Guardsmen.



For college girls there was the tempting prospect of marrying an officer and going with him to a foreign country at government expense. I was so desperate to see Europe I might have done it if I had had the chance, but both of the boys I was dating chose to enlist after graduation. They wanted, in the parlance of the day, "to get it over with," but their resignation was mixed with relief. All three of us were sunk in that familiar senior-year depression brought on by the realization that we had been in school for 17 of our 21 years. The psychological situation called for a purely physical interim in which we did not have to think. Thanks to the draft the boys had one, and I envied them.

My beaux were part of the palely loitering bohemian crowd, all arty intensity and nascent alienation, the kind of boys drill sergeants love to get hold of, the kind of whom fathers say, "It'll do him good." When I saw them again a few years later it was obvious that they had been gotten hold of and that it had done them good.

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Not that they had learned to love the Army; on the contrary, they hated it. But they had lost the palely loitering look and their bohemian petulance had been replaced by jaunty cynicism.

I thought of them when I read the ruminations of editor Max Perkins on the self-image of the untested male:

> A man who wends his life with his knees crooked under a desk is not more than half a man, and we all know it. And Dr. Johnson said, when they were running down the military, "If a general walked into this room now we'd all be ashamed." And if a good workman, a mechanic, walked into a boardroom at a directors meeting, the directors would all feel ashamed. And if old Zimmerman, foreman at our press, a man like Adam Bede, in a striped apron, walked into our directors meeting we'd all feel ashamed. And that is true and must mean something, but what, I don't know.

Nothing in female psychology can compare to this. The career woman and the Mommy Tracker, the bluestocking and the sexpot, are well aware of their differences but the reaction they rouse in each other is mutual contempt, not shame. You will never find a woman executive watching busy diner waitresses with envious admiration the way male executives watch construction workers at a building site. It's the Adam Bede syndrome, the overcivilized man's need to prove himself the equal of earthy men that was satisfied to a large extent by universal military service.

The draft produced the kind of men that today's girls have never known, and relations between the sexes were better for it. What sticks in my mind about them is their self-sufficiency and competence in fixing things that broke and figuring out solutions to emergencies. Thanks to the draft I belong to the last generation of American women who could scream "Do something!" and get results. Most of my men were intellectuals but they had been taught in basic training to change a tire in 90 seconds, rig up electrical wiring, tie knots that stayed tied, and take a rifle apart and resassemble it while blindfolded. This last was never necessary in civilian life but it made for a self-assured deftness that was awesome.

Nowadays the Adam Bede syndrome has been turned on its head; awe is reserved for women and their "great strides" and middle-class young men have turned into tentative, palely loitering computer jocks whose idea of "Do something!" is reloading the software.

Proof that American men want their Adam Bede syndrome back is abundant. Al Gore's hysteria-tinged boast of working on a farm, shoveling manure, castrating hogs, and delivering calves "with my bare hands" is straight out of George Eliot, recalling those passages that Victorian reviewers of *Adam Bede* condemned as "startling horrors of rustic reality." After six years in an administration incapable of feeling ashamed of anything, least of all the entrance of a general, Gore might need psychological comfort more than votes.

The best description of the Adam Bede syndrome as it applies to the draft comes from poet Michael Blumenthal. Writing in 1981, he compared his fellow Vietnam draft-dodgers to those who served.

> To put it bluntly, they have something that we haven't got. It is, to be sure, somewhat vague, but nonetheless real, and can be embraced under several headings: realism, discipline, masculinity (kind of a dirty word these days), resilience, tenacity, resourcefulness. . . . There is something missing in my generation of hypersensitive, "untainted" men. It is something that cannot simply be dismissed with so emotionally loaded a word as "macho." . . . It has to do, I think, with camaraderie, with shared purpose, with self-transcendence. It has to do with going into the dark tunnel of danger and mortality and emerging on the other side. . . . Ultimately, it may have to do with everything that follows: with having a family, with making commitments, with knowing what it means to sacrifice, with being an adult.

If this was true in 1981, think how much truer it is now. Maybe it's time to scream "Do something!" NR

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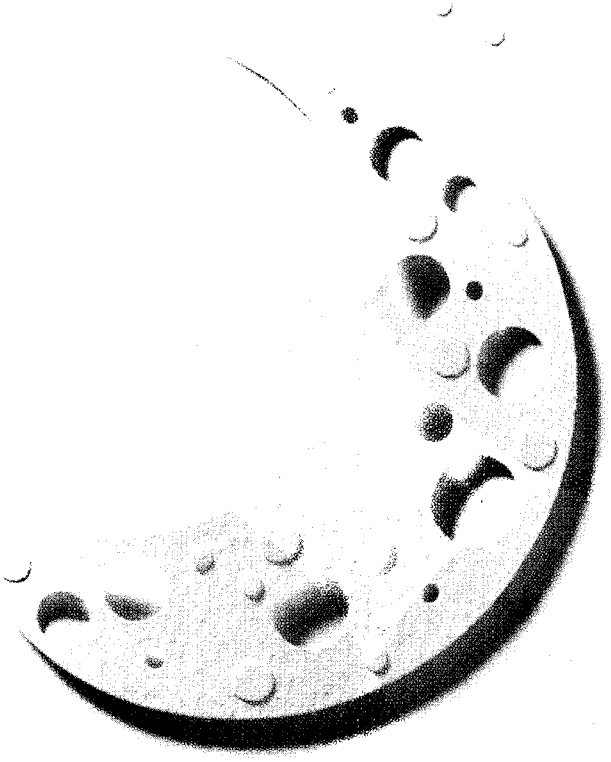

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